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Bertrand Russell

My Present View of the World

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit."
EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS: II, 8.

THE VIEW to which I have been gradually led is one which has been almost universally misunderstood and which, for this reason, I will try to state as simply and clearly as I possibly can. I am, for the present, only endeavouring to state the view, not to give the reasons which have led me to it. I will, however, say this much by way of preface: it is a view which results from a synthesis of four different sciences—namely, physics, physiology, psychology, and mathematical logic. Mathematical logic is used in creating structures having assigned properties out of elements that have much less mathematical smoothness. I reverse the process which has been common in philosophy since Kant. It has been common among philosophers to begin with how we know and proceed afterwards to what we know. I think this is a mistake, because knowing how we know is one small department of knowing what we know. I think it a mistake for another reason: it tends to give to knowing a cosmic importance which it by no means deserves and thus prepares the philosophical student for the belief that mind has some kind of supremacy over the non-mental universe, or even that the non-mental universe is nothing but a nightmare dreamt by mind in its un-philosophical moments. This point of view is completely remote from my imaginative picture of the cosmos. I accept without qualification the view that results from astronomy and geology, from which it would appear that there is no evidence of anything mental except in a tiny fragment of space-time, and that the great processes of nebular and stellar evolution proceed according to laws in which mind plays no part.

If this initial bias is accepted, it is obviously to theoretical physics that we must first look for an understanding of the major processes in the history of the universe. Unfortunately, theoretical physics no longer speaks with that splendid dogmatic clarity that it enjoyed in the 17th century. Newton worked with four fundamental concepts: space, time, matter, and force. All four have been swept into limbo by modern physicists. Space and time, for Newton, were solid, independent things. They have been replaced by space-time, which is not substantial but only a system of relations. Matter has had to be replaced by series of events. Force, which was the first of the Newtonian concepts to be abandoned, has been replaced by energy; and energy turns out to be indistinguishable from the pale ghost which is all that remains of matter. Cause, which was the philosophical form of what physicists called force, has also become decrepit. I will not admit that it is dead, but it has nothing like the vigour of its earlier days.

For all these reasons, what modern physics has to say is somewhat confused. Nevertheless, we are bound to believe it on pain of death. If there were any community which rejected the doctrines of modern physics, physicists employed by a hostile government would have no difficulty in exterminating it. The modern physicist, therefore, enjoys powers far

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exceeding those of the Inquisition in its palmiest days, and it certainly behoves us to treat his pronouncements with due awe. For my part, I have no doubt that, although progressive changes are to be expected in physics, the present doctrines are likely to be nearer the truth than any rival doctrines now before the world. Science is at no moment quite right, but it is seldom quite wrong, and has, as a rule, a better chance of being right than the theories of the unscientific. It is, therefore, rational to accept it hypothetically.

IT IS not always realised how exceedingly abstract is the information that theoretical physics has to give. It lays down certain fundamental equations which enable it to deal with the logical structure of events, while leaving it completely unknown what is the intrinsic character of the events that have the structure. We only know the intrinsic character of events when they happen to us. Nothing whatever in theoretical physics enables us to say anything about the intrinsic character of events elsewhere. They may be just like the events that happen to us, or they may be totally different in strictly unimaginable ways. All that physics gives us is certain equations giving abstract properties of their changes. But as to what it is that changes, and what it changes from and to—as to this, physics is silent.

The next step is an approximation to perception, but without passing beyond the realm of physics. A photographic plate exposed to a portion of the night sky takes photographs of separate stars. Given similar photographic plates and atmospheric conditions, different photographs of the same portion of the sky will be closely similar. There must, therefore, be some influence (I am using the vaguest word that I can think of) proceeding from the various stars to the various photographic plates. Physicists used to think that this influence consisted of waves, but now they think that it consists of little bundles of energy called photons. They know how fast a photon travels and in what manner it will, on occasion, deviate from a rectilinear path. When it hits a photographic plate, it is transformed into energy of a different kind. Since each separate star gets itself photographed, and since it can be photographed anywhere on a clear night where there is an unimpeded view of the sky, there must be something happening, at each place where it can be photographed, that is specially connected with it. It follows that the atmosphere at night contains everywhere as many separable events as there are stars that can be photographed there, and each of these separable events must have some kind of individual history connecting it with the star from which it has come. All this follows from the consideration of different photographic plates exposed to the same night sky.

OR LET us take another illustration. Let us imagine a rich cynic, disgusted by the philistinism of theatre-goers, deciding to have a play performed, not before live people, but before a collection of cine-cameras. The cine-cameras—supposing them all of equal excellence—will produce closely similar records, differing according to the laws of perspective and according to their distance from the stage. This again shows, like the photographic plate, that at each cine-camera a complex of events is occurring at each moment which is closely related to the complex of events occurring on the stage. There is here the same need as before of separable influences proceeding from diverse sources. If, at a given moment, one actor shouts, *"Die, Varlet!"* while another exclaims, *"Help! Murder!"* both will be recorded, and therefore something connected with both must be happening at each cine-camera.

To take yet another illustration: suppose that a speech is recorded simultaneously by a number of gramophones, the gramophone records do not in any obvious way resemble the original speech, and yet, by a suitable mechanism, they can be made to reproduce something exceedingly like it. They must, therefore, have something in common with the speech. But what they have in common can only be expressed in rather abstract language concerning structure. Broadcasting affords an even better illustration of the same

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process. What intervenes between an orator and a man listening to him on the radio is not, on the face of it, at all similar either to what the orator says or to what the listener hears. Here, again, we have a causal chain in which the beginning resembles the end, but the intermediate terms, so far as intrinsic qualities are concerned, appear to be of quite a different kind. What is preserved throughout the causal chain, in this case as in that of the gramophone record, is a certain constancy of structure.

These various processes all belong purely to physics. We do not suppose that the cine-cameras have minds, and we should not suppose so even if, by a little ingenuity on the part of their makers, those in the stalls were made to sneer at the moments when those in the pit applauded. What these physical analogies to perception show is that in most places at most times, if not in all places at all times, a vast assemblage of overlapping events is taking place, and that many of these events, at a given place and time, are connected by causal chains with an original event which, by a sort of prolific heredity, has produced offspring more or less similar to itself in a vast number of different places.

WHAT sort of picture of the universe do these considerations invite us to construct? I think the answer must proceed by stages differing as to the degree of analysis that has been effected. For present purposes I shall content myself by treating as fundamental the notion of "event." I conceive each event as occupying a finite amount of space-time and as overlapping with innumerable other events which occupy partially, but not wholly, the same region of space-time. The mathematician who wishes to operate with point-instants can construct them by means of mathematical logic out of assemblages of overlapping events, but that is only for his technical purposes, which, for the moment, we may ignore. The events occurring in any given small region of space-time are not unconnected with events occurring elsewhere. On the contrary, if a photographic plate can photograph a certain star, that is because an event is happening at the photographic plate which is connected by what we may call heredity with the star in question. The photographic plate, in turn, if it is photographed, is the origin of a fresh progeny. In mathematical physics, which is only interested in exceedingly abstract aspects of the matters with which it deals, these various processes appear as paths by which energy travels. It is because mathematical physics is so abstract that its world seems so different from that of our daily life. But the difference is more apparent than real. Suppose you study population statistics, the people who make up the items are deprived of almost all the characteristics of real people before they are recorded in the census. But in this case, because the process of abstraction has not proceeded very far, we do not find it very difficult to undo it in imagination. But in the case of mathematical physics, the journey back from the abstract to the concrete is long and arduous, and, out of sheer weariness, we are tempted to rest by the way and endow some semi-abstraction with a concrete reality which it cannot justly claim.

There is a possibility of a further stage of analysis in which events are no longer the ultimate raw material. But I will not consider this in the present discussion.

WE HAVE seen that, for purely physical reasons, events in many different places and times can often be collected into families proceeding from an original progenitor as the light from a star proceeds from it in all directions. The successive generations in a single branch of such a family have varying degrees of resemblance to each other according to circumstances. The events which constitute the journey of the light from a star to our atmosphere change slowly and little. That is why it is possible to regard them as the voyage of single entities called photons, which may be thought of as persisting. But when the light reaches our atmosphere, a series of continually odder and odder things begins to happen to it. It may be stopped or transformed by mist or cloud. It may hit a sheet of water and be reflected or refracted.

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It may hit a photographic plate and become a black dot of interest to an astronomer. Finally, it may happen to hit a human eye. When this occurs, the results are very complicated. There are a set of events between the eye and the brain which are studied by the physiologist and which have as little resemblance to the photons in the outer world as radio waves have to the orator's speech. At last the disturbance in the nerves, which has been traced by the physiologist, reaches the appropriate region in the brain; and then, at last, the man whose brain it is sees the star. People are puzzled because the seeing of the star seems so different from the processes that the physiologist discovered in the optic nerve, and yet it is clear that without these processes the man would not see the star. And so there is supposed to be a gulf between mind and matter, and a mystery which it is held in some degree impious to try to dissipate. I believe, for my part, that there is no greater mystery than there is in the transformation by the radio of electro-magnetic waves into sounds. I think the mystery is produced by a wrong conception of the physical world and by a Manichæan fear of degrading the mental world to the level of the supposedly inferior world of matter.

The world of which we have been speaking hitherto is entirely an inferred world. We do not perceive the sort of entities that physics talk of, and, if it is of such entities that the physical world is composed, then we do not see the eye or the optic nerve, for the eye and the optic nerve, equally, if the physicist is to be believed, consist of the odd hypothetical entities with which the theoretical physicist tries to make us familiar. These entities, however, since they owe their credibility to inference, are only defined to the degree that is necessary to make them fulfil their inferential purpose. It is not necessary to suppose that electrons, protons, neutrons, mesons, photons, and the rest have that sort of simple reality that belongs to immediate objects of experience. They have, at best, the sort of reality that belongs to "London." "London" is a convenient word, but every *fact* which is stated by using this word could be stated, though more cumbrously, without using it. There is, however, a difference, and an important one, between London and the electrons: we can see the various parts of which London is composed, and, indeed, the parts are more immediately known to us than the whole. In the case of the electron, we do not perceive it and we do not perceive anything that we know to be a constituent of it. We know it only as a hypothetical entity fulfilling certain theoretical purposes. So far as theoretical physics is concerned, anything that fulfils these purposes can be taken to *be* the electron. It may be simple or complex; and, if complex, it may be built out of any components that allow the resultant structure to have the requisite properties. All this applies not only to the inanimate world but, equally, to the eyes and other sense organs, the nerves, and the brain.

But our world is not wholly a matter of inference. There are things that we know without asking the opinion of men of science. If you are too hot or too cold, you can be perfectly aware of this fact without asking the physicist what heat and cold consist of. When you see other people's faces, you have an experience which is completely indubitable, but which does not consist of seeing the things which theoretical physicists speak of. You see other people's eyes and you believe that they see yours. Your own eyes as visual objects belong to the inferred part of the world, though the inference is rendered fairly indubitable by mirrors, photographs, and the testimony of your friends. The inference to your own eyes as visual objects is essentially of the same sort as the physicist's inference to electrons, etc.; and, if you are going to deny validity to the physicist's inferences, you ought also to deny that you know you have visible eyes—which is absurd, as Euclid would say.

We may give the name "data" to all the things of which we are aware without inference. They include all our observed sensations—visual, auditory, tactile, etc. Commonsense sees reason to attribute many of our sensations to causes outside our own bodies.

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It does not believe that the room in which it is sitting ceases to exist when it shuts its eyes or goes to sleep. It does not believe that its wife and children are mere figments of its imagination. In all this we may agree with common-sense; but where it goes wrong is in supposing that inanimate objects resemble, in their intrinsic qualities, the perceptions which they cause. To believe this is as groundless as it would be to suppose that a gramophone record resembles the music that it causes. It is not, however, the *difference* between the physical world and the word of data that I chiefly wish to emphasise. On the contrary, it is the possibility of much closer resemblances than physics at first sight suggests that I consider it important to bring to light.

I THINK perhaps I can best make my own views clear by comparing them with those of Leibniz. Leibniz thought that the universe consisted of monads, each of which was a little mind and each of which mirrored the universe. They did this mirroring with varying degrees of inexactness. The best monads had the least confusion in their picture of the universe. Misled by the Aristotelian subject-predicate logic, Leibniz held that monads do not interact and that the fact of their continuing to mirror the same universe is to be explained by a pre-established harmony. This part of his doctrine is totally unacceptable. It is only through the causal action of the outer world upon us that we reflect the world in so far as we do reflect it. But there are other aspects of his doctrine which are more in agreement with the theory that I wish to advocate. One of the most important of these is as to space. There are for Leibniz (though he was never quite clear on this point) two kinds of space. There is the space in the private world of each monad, which is the space that the monad can come to know by analysing and arranging data without assuming anything beyond data. But there is also another kind of space. The monads, Leibniz tells us, reflect the world each from its own point of view, the differences of points of view being analogous to differences of perspective. The arrangement of the whole assemblage of points of view gives us another kind of space, different from that in the private world of each monad. In this public space, each monad occupies a point or, at any rate, a very small region. Although in its private world there is a private space which from its private point of view is immense, the whole of this immensity shrinks into a tiny pin-point when the monad is placed among other monads. We may call the space in each monad's world of data "private" space, and the space consisting of the diverse points of view of diverse monads "physical" space. In so far as monads correctly mirror the world, the geometrical properties of private space will be analogous to those of physical space.

Most of this can be applied with little change to exemplify the theory that I wish to advocate. There is space in the world of my perceptions and there is space in physics. The whole of the space in my perceptions, for me as for Leibniz, occupies only a tiny region in physical space. There is, however, an important difference between my theory and that of Leibniz, which has to do with a different conception of causality and with consequences of the theory of relativity. I think that space-time order in the physical world is bound up with causation, and this, in turn, with the irreversibility of physical processes. In classical physics, everything was reversible. If you were to start every bit of matter moving backwards with the same velocity as before, the whole history of the universe would unroll itself backwards. Modern physics, starting from the Second Law of Thermodynamics, has abandoned this view not only in thermodynamics but also elsewhere. Radioactive atoms disintegrate and do not put themselves together again.

Speaking generally, processes in the physical world all have a certain direction which makes a distinction between cause and effect that was absent in classical dynamics. I think that the space-time order of the physical world involves this directed causality. It is on this ground that I maintain an opinion which all other philosophers find shocking: namely, that people's thoughts are in their heads. The

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light from a star travels over intervening space and causes a disturbance in the optic nerve ending in an occurrence in the brain. What I maintain is that the occurrence in the brain *is* a visual sensation. I maintain, in fact, that the brain consists of thoughts—using "thought" in its widest sense, as it is used by Descartes.

To this people will reply, "Nonsense! I can see a brain through a microscope, and I can see that it does not consist of thoughts but of matter just as tables and chairs do." This is a

Wittgenstein —

WITTGENSTEIN'S doctrines influenced me profoundly. I have come to think that on many points I went too far in agreeing with him. Wittgenstein's impact upon me came in two waves: the first of these was before the First War; the second was immediately after the War when he sent me the manuscript of his TRACTATUS. *His later doctrines, as they appear in his* PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS, *have not influenced me at all.*

At the beginning of 1914, Wittgenstein gave me a short typescript consisting of notes on various logical points. This, together with a large number of conversations, affected my thinking during the war years while he was in the Austrian army and I was, therefore, cut off from all contact with him. What I knew of his doctrines at this time was derived entirely from unpublished sources. I do not feel sure that, either then or later, the views which I believed myself to have derived from him were in fact his views. He always vehemently repudiated expositions of his doctrines by others, even when those others were ardent disciples.

At the beginning of 1918, I gave a course of lectures in London which were subsequently printed in THE MONIST. *I prefaced these lectures by the following acknowledgement of my indebtedness to Wittgenstein: "The following articles are the first two lectures of a course of eight lectures delivered in London in the first months of 1918, and are very largely concerned with explaining certain ideas which I learnt from my friend and former pupil Ludwig Wittgenstein. I have had no opportunity of knowing his views since August 1914, and I do not even know whether he is alive or dead. He has therefore no responsibility for what is said in these lectures beyond that of having originally supplied many of the theories contained in them...."*

It was in these lectures that I first adopted the name "Logical Atomism" to describe my philosophy. But it is not worth while to linger upon this phase, since Wittgenstein's doctrines in 1914 were in an immature stage. What was important was the TRACTATUS, *of which Wittgenstein sent me the typescript very soon after the Armistice, while he was still a prisoner at Monte Cassino....*

During the period since 1914 three philosophies have successively dominated the British philosophical world: first that of Wittgenstein's TRACTATUS, *second that of the Logical Positivists, and third that of Wittgenstein's* PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS. *Of these, the first had very considerable influence upon my own thinking, though I do not now think that this influence was wholly good. The second school, that of the Logical Positivists, had my general sympathy though I disagreed with some of its most distinctive doctrines. The third school, which for convenience I shall designate as WII to distinguish it from the doctrines of the* TRACTATUS *which I shall call WI, remains to me completely unintelligible. Its positive doctrines seem to me trivial and its negative doctrines unfounded. I have not found in Wittgenstein's* PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS *anything that seemed to me interesting and I do not understand why a whole school finds important wisdom in its pages. Psychologically this is surprising. The earlier Wittgenstein, whom I knew intimately, was a man addicted to passionately intense thinking, profoundly aware of difficult problems of which I, like him, felt the importance, and possessed (so at least I thought) of true philosophical genius. The later Wittgenstein, on the contrary, seems to have grown tired of serious thinking and to have invented a doctrine which would make such an activity unnecessary. I do not for one moment believe that the doctrine which has these lazy consequences is true. I realise, however, that I have an over-*

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sheer mistake. What you see when you look at a brain through a microscope is part of your private world. It is the effect in you of a long causal process starting from the brain that you say you are looking at. The brain that you say you are looking at is, no doubt, part of the physical world; but this is not the brain which is a datum in your experience. *That* brain is a remote effect of the physical brain. And, if the location of events in physical space-time is to be effected, as I maintain, by causal relations, then your percept,

— and Russell

poweringly strong bias against it, for, if it is true, philosophy is, at best, a slight help to lexicographers, and at worst, an idle tea-table amusement....

In common with all philosophers before WII, my fundamental aim has been to understand the world as well as may be and to separate what may count as knowledge from what must be rejected as unfounded opinion. But for WII I should not have thought it worth-while to state this aim, which I should have supposed could be taken for granted. But we are now told that it is not the world that we are to try to understand but only sentences, and it is assumed that all sentences can count as true except those uttered by philosophers. This, however, is perhaps an overstatement. Adherents of WII are fond of pointing out, as if it were a discovery, that sentences may be interrogative, imperative, or optative, as well as indicative. This, however, does not take us beyond the realm of sentences. There is a curious suggestion, already to be found among some Logical Positivists, that the world of language can be quite divorced from the world of fact. If you mention that a spoken sentence is a physical occurrence consisting of certain movements of matter and that a written sentence consists of marks of one colour on a background of another colour, you will be thought vulgar. You are supposed to forget that the things people say have non-linguistic causes and non-linguistic effects and that language is just as much a bodily activity as walking or eating. Some Logical Positivists—notably Neurath and Hempel, and Carnap at one time—maintained explicitly that sentences must not be confronted with fact. They maintain that assertions are to be compared with assertions, not with experiences, and that we can never compare reality with propositions. Hempel maintains that the system which we call true "may only be characterised by the historical fact, that it is the system which is actually adopted by mankind, and especially by the scientists of our culture circle. I have criticised this view in AN INQUIRY INTO MEANING AND TRUTH, *and will here only repeat the gist of the criticism, which is that what the scientists of your "culture circle" say is a fact and therefore it does not matter what they say but only what other members of your culture circle say they say. It does not seem to have occurred to these authors that when I see a printed statement on a page I am confronted with a sensible fact and that, if they are right, the truth as to what is printed on the page is not to be ascertained by looking at the page but by asking our friends what they* say *is printed there. We may illustrate Hempel's position by a fable: At a certain period, when his finances were not very flourishing (so the fable avers), he entered a cheap restaurant in Paris. He asked for the menu. He read it, and he ordered beef. All this since entering the restaurant was language. The food came and he took a mouthful. This was confrontation with fact. He summoned the restaurateur and said, "This is horse-flesh, not beef." The restaurateur replied, "Pardon me, but the scientists of my culture circle include the sentence 'this is beef' among those that they accept." Hempel on his own showing would be obliged to accept this with equanimity. This is absurd, as Carnap in due course came to realise. But the adherents of WII go a step further. There had been two views about empirical statements: one that they were justified by some relation to facts; the other that they were justified by conformity to syntactical rules. But the adherents of WII did not bother with any kind of justification and thus secure for language an untrammelled freedom which it has never hitherto enjoyed. The desire to understand the world is, they think, an outdated folly. This is my most fundamental point of disagreement with them.*

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which comes after events in the eye and optic nerve leading into the brain, must be located in your brain. I may illustrate how I differ from most philosophers by quoting the title of an article by Mr. H. Hudson in *Mind* of April 1956. His article is entitled "Why we cannot witness or observe what goes on 'in our heads.'" What I maintain is that we *can* witness or observe what goes on in our heads, and that we cannot witness or observe anything else at all.

WE CAN approach the same result by another route. When we were considering the photographic plate which photographs a portion of the starry heavens, we saw that this involves a great multiplicity of occurrences at the photographic plate: namely, at the very least, one for each object that it can photograph. I infer that, in every small region of space-time, there is an immense multiplicity of overlapping events each connected by a causal line to an origin at some earlier time—though, usually, at a very slightly earlier time. A sensitive instrument, such as a photographic plate, placed anywhere, may be said in a sense to "perceive" the various objects from which these causal lines emanate. We do not use the word "perceive" unless the instrument in question is a living brain, but that is because those regions which are inhabited by living brains have certain peculiar relations among the events occurring there. The most important of these is memory. Wherever these peculiar relations exist, we say that there is a percipient. We may define a "mind" as a collection of events connected with each other by memory-chains backwards and forwards. We know about one such collection of events—namely, that constituting ourself—more intimately and directly than we know about anything else in the world. In regard to what happens to ourself, we know not only abstract logical structure, but also qualities—by which I mean what characterises sounds as opposed to colours, or red as opposed to green. This is the sort of thing that we cannot know where the physical world is concerned.

There are three key points in the above theory. The first is that the entities that occur in mathematical physics are not part of the stuff of the world, but are constructions composed of events and taken as units for the convenience of the mathematician. The second is that the whole of what we perceive without inference belongs to our private world. In this respect, I agree with Berkeley. The starry heaven that we know in visual sensation is inside us. The external starry heaven that we believe in is inferred. The third point is that the causal lines which enable us to be aware of a diversity of objects, though there are some such lines everywhere, are apt to peter out like rivers in the sand. That is why we do not at all times perceive everything.

I DO NOT pretend that the above theory can be proved. What I contend is that, like the theories of physics, it cannot be disproved, and gives an answer to many problems which older theorists have found puzzling. I do not think that any prudent person will claim more than this for any theory.

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Alastair Buchan

Their Bomb and Ours

Some Concluding Remarks on the Paradox of Force

THERE is a modest hotel in Paris which has the sublime to ridiculous name of *l'Hotel de l'Univers et Cheltenham*. I have sometimes thought it should serve as the permanent meeting-place for those who try to think about the problems of defence and survival. For having only recently become a subject of general intellectual debate—as economics became a subject of general debate, ceasing to be the province of bankers and civil servants alone, about a century ago—the methodology of the subject is still chaotic. While half of those who write about defence and strategy are concerned with the problems of the universe, the other half are concerned with Cheltenham. Every defence debate in the House of Commons includes some far-ranging estimate of the chances of mankind's survival in the second half of the 20th century, a highly technical dissertation on aircraft or missiles, and also an impassioned plea that Highland regiments should be allowed to retain their kilts. Since so much of the argument is carried on at different levels and on different assumptions, there is seldom a useful dialectic.

For this reason the six articles that have been published already (including Joseph Alsop's "The New Balance of Power" in the May ENCOUNTER) have been both stimulating and revealing, because they have covered almost the whole spectrum of contemporary ideas and anxieties. Mr. Alsop, throwing down a gage from his well-stocked glove compartment, expressed his deep concern, not about the prospects of nuclear suicide, but about the new freedom of action which the developing strategic stalemate is giving to the Soviet leaders in the cold war, with their subtler techniques and greatly superior conventional forces. Richard Crossman and John Strachey (I wonder what some future Halévy or Trevelyan will make of the fact that reflective thinking on defence now comes largely from the Left instead of from the Right in British politics) developed Alsop's thesis from two opposing points of view. They both agree with him that the new situation leaves the West no alternative to an increase in the strength of its conventional forces. But Mr. Strachey, taking what might be called the Front Bench line, argues that the balance in "the middle game" can never be redressed without supplementing conventional firepower with small or "battlefield" atomic weapons, and that as far as British policy is concerned we should remain a nuclear power, finding the necessary increase in our cold war strength from a reduction of our Imperial commitments. Mr. Crossman, by contrast, argues that atomic weapons are unusable in limited war and that we should both find the resources for increased conventional strength and seek to correct the American "nuclear obsession," whose psychological sources he so accurately describes, by renouncing our own nuclear weapon production under agreement with NATO, and by placing greater emphasis on economic aid.

The other three writers, Peregrine Worsthorne, Paul Ignotus, and Wayland Young are mainly concerned with a different problem—with hot war rather than with cold. Messrs. Alsop, Strachey, and Crossman assume that the strategic relationship between Russia and America has reached or is approaching deadlock, that hot war between them is an unlikely if not an impossible contingency, and go on from there. Mr. Worsthorne, on the other hand, using recent analyses of Soviet military publications, writes of the assured and confident attitude towards the problems of total war itself that can be detected in Moscow. While the West's aim is purely negative, to avoid the destruction and unthinkable horror of a nuclear war, the Russians have been considering how such a war could be fought to achieve positive military and political gains for themselves. He does not suggest that the Russians are actually planning a

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nuclear assault on the West; he is concerned rather to show the flexibility which the fact of having grown up in an age of nuclear stalemate imparts to Russian thinking, while Western policy remains bedevilled by assumptions drawn from the days of its lost nuclear supremacy. By implication at least, he is concerned lest the new Western search for an equal flexibility should diminish the value of our great deterrent and turn Russian assurance into foolhardiness. Mr. Ignotus takes up the same point: the folly of any unilateral renunciation of our own deterrent power. He argues that for Britain to renounce its hydrogen bomb, thereby putting pressure on America to do the same, would invoke exactly the situation which the advocates of this policy seek to avoid. By opening up the prospect of enslaving mankind—and as a Hungarian he knows a lot about slavery—it would expose the assured figures in Moscow, whom Worsthorne has described, to the temptation to start a war that would resolve any argument about the relative morality of surrender or extermination by achieving both. Wayland Young pleads on moral rather than on political or military grounds for the unilateral renunciation of our own nuclear weapon in the belief that only a striking gesture of this kind—the breaking of the infinite gradation of force which now extends from a black eye to the end of the human race at the division between chemical and nuclear explosives—can avert the risk of the latter.

UNLIKE a rainbow, this spectrum meets at both ends. At the one end stand the Air Force generals in Washington, and a dwindling number of people in Whitehall, their eyes riveted on the long-distance arms race, convinced that the only modern alternatives are total peace and total war, believing the implications of strategic stalemate are too dangerous to accept, and that credibility must somehow be restored to the American deterrent by a continuing accumulation of offensive power.

In the centre, there is a growing body of opinion for which Strachey and Crossman and many others speak. They are supported by most naval and army officers in London, Washington, and SHAPE, most of the leaders of the Democratic Party, some influential Tories, and the majority of intelligent newspapers, but all with little influence as yet upon the makers of high policy. The assumption which unites them is that the Soviet/American strategic deadlock is now fundamentally unbreakable and therefore unlikely to lead to total war, that conflicts for limited objectives are a more likely contingency and that therefore conventional forces, the means of fighting them, must have as high a priority as weapons of deterrence, the means of preventing total war. This body of opinion is divided against itself by an unresolved argument (which cuts across any party lines) as to whether the West can contemplate the use of battlefield atomic weapons to redress its inferiority in conventional forces without invoking total war.

And at the other end, stand a motley array of organisations and individuals, their spokesmen mostly intellectuals who had paid very little attention to known facts before the Soviet Sputniks frightened them out of pleasanter avocations (the power and logic of Wayland Young's arguments suggest that he was at work on the problem long before), but united in the demand that the atomic weapon must be eliminated from international relations. In their search for absolute solutions they have much more in common with General Curtis Lemay than with Crossman, Strachey, and the large but not yet powerful body of opinion for which they speak.

But who is right—not in moral terms, but in their estimates of the future? If Bertrand Russell is correct in saying that the arms race must lead to war, and that the human race has now only an even chance of survival, then clearly anyone who thinks in lesser terms than the Universe, anyone who is concerned with the defence of the Cheltenhams of international tension, Formosa or Lebanon or Berlin, is doing a grave disservice to his species. The urgent problems are disarmament and world government (no matter who dominates it). But if he is wrong, if total nuclear war is the least likely contingency in the years ahead, then the absolutists, both the massive retaliators and the nuclear disarmers, are doing harm, psychologically by the development of a Munich state of mind, politically by diverting the attention of Western public opinion from the kinds of war it may have to be prepared to fight to a kind of war which it is unlikely to have to fight.

CONSEQUENTLY, one must first examine the nature of the arms race before being in any position to assert that the strategic deadlock is unbreakable. For the Soviet/American contest in missiles, in submarines, and in the means of defence against them has reached a pitch of intensity which now makes the contest self-generating, and independent of the level of political tension between the two countries and their allies. Can either country achieve any miracle of invention or production that would put the one at the mercy of the other?

We should be clear about one point. It is not a contest about nuclear or destructive power; the United States government has permitted the Atomic Energy Commission to produce a stock of fissile material, and bombs as

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well, sufficient to destroy Russia many times over, and if Russia's supply of bombs for the purpose of threatening the United States with crippling destruction is not yet quite adequate for her needs, it is a matter of a year or two at most. Indeed the double criticism of American policy under the Eisenhower régime is not only that it became content with the facile solution of deterrence at the very moment when Soviet progress was making it an insufficient answer, but that it became so hypnotised with the revolution in destructive power that the atom had wrought that it failed to appreciate that two more revolutions, in aerodynamics and in electronics, broadly, the missile and the defence against it—were treading on its heels. (Unlimited destructive power, moreover, is not a new phenomenon. For most of this century toxicological agents capable of destroying life on the scale of the H-bomb have existed, and any small country, or even the research laboratory of a well-organised borough council, can produce enough psittacosis virus to obliterate the whole of human life.)

After reading the assessments of those who are best qualified to judge the trend of technical developments, I am convinced that the balance is reaching a point where it is incapable of being overturned by one side or the other. This does not mean that one side may not gain a strong lead and even a decisive edge in one form of striking power, the Russians perhaps in the ICBM, the Americans in the Polaris submarine-launched missile. The reasons are those set out by Joseph Alsop in the May ENCOUNTER, namely, that the aggressor is now faced with an almost insuperable problem, that of destroying all the bases from which an opponent could retaliate against him; for if he fails to destroy even a few it will not be his own bases but his own civilisation which will be destroyed. To-day, in the last stage of the supremacy of the manned bomber, Russia would have to destroy 400 bases around the world from which the United States Strategic Air Command can operate, in order to render herself inviolate. As the Western deterrent becomes centred in the missile over the course of the next five years, the size of the target will diminish and its numbers multiply. When the missile launching-site goes underground with the next generation of weapons, the number of missiles needed to destroy it will rise sharply until one reaches the extreme calculation that with 4,000 Western missile launching-sites at ranges between 1,000 and 4,500 miles from Russia it would require 50,000 to 60,000 Soviet long-range missiles to enable Russia to attack the West with impunity. This is the heritage which the bygone nuclear revolution has imposed for all time upon the strategic relationship between Russia and the West, or between any two groups of nuclear powers in future, with a roughly equivalent means of delivery. The task of the aggressed is simpler than the aggressor's: he will concentrate on area targets where the aggressor must concentrate on pinpoint targets. As Raymond Aron has said in his new book:*

> The global balance is not at the mercy of any partial or temporary disparity. Numerical inferiority matters little, provided one is capable of bombing the enemy up to saturation point. It is highly desirable that the general staffs should not resign themselves to any inferiority; it is unfortunate that the Press and public opinion should exaggerate the possible effects of a partial inferiority.

For my part I believe that the Soviet leaders are caught in exactly the same trap as the Americans. Developments which they undertook for their deterrent value have opened up new avenues of scientific possibility which, for their own protection, they dare not refrain from exploiting. There is no doubt that the Soviets recognise the great diplomatic possibilities which their prowess in missile technology and nucleonics offers them, in being able to checkmate the great American deterrent while still retaining large, efficient, and well-equipped conventional forces to apply pressure in local situations, to intimidate small governments, or weaken the nerves of the West. It is just because this is such a fruitful field for them, that their interest in total war is likely to be as academic as our own.

BUT even if the main strategic balance is unlikely to be upset, I do not believe that we can, for several reasons, accept the arms race merely as a form of noisy background music to an appreciation of the new political context of the cold war.

1. The fact that megaton or even kiloton weapons are unlikely ever to be used does not mean that they are going to be put into some sort of international lumber room. During the next three to eight years the "balance of terror" must pass through a very dangerous phase. For what the missile does to the Soviet/American equation is not to upset it but to make it as delicate as a hair-spring by reducing the West's minimum warning-time that an attack is under way from at least four hours, and probably much longer (for the operational deployment of aircraft cannot go undetected), to perhaps thirty minutes. This may involve a minute-by-minute alert on the part of every American retaliatory instrument—bombers, missile-sites, carriers—so

* *On War*. By RAYMOND ARON. Secker & Warburg. 16s.

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that it can send its weapon on its way Russiawards before it is itself hit, with all the dangers (a false reading of radar signals, etc.) that this implies. More important still, it carries the danger that the decision to retaliate might have to be devolved below the highest political level. When an ICBM takes only thirty minutes to travel from Leningrad to Chicago, it is impossible, if our deterrent is to remain credible, for Gettysburg, Chequers, and Colombey-les-deux-églises to consult with each other or probably even be consulted before the retaliatory missiles are fired. A sober U.S. Air Force officer writing in *Air University Quarterly* eighteen months ago has this to say:

> We must take steps to reduce national reaction time.... There may be a requirement in this connection for reviewing the laws, traditions, and policies governing who can act, under varying circumstances "for and in the absence of the President and other high officials...."

This dangerous phase will probably end some time in the mid-sixties when the present generation of missiles, based on static sites, give way to those in deep underground sites, in submarines, and to the solid-fuel intermediate missile on a mobile base. This will restore to the aggressed the ability to accept the first blow without having his retaliatory capacity destroyed, and thereby make it less necessary for him to have his finger constantly on the trigger if he is to maintain the value of his deterrent. But even five years of edginess is a long time nowadays; and though the world that emerges from it may be a somewhat safer place, the plane of mutual destructive capacity will have been rising all the time. Moreover, by the mid-sixties there may be seven or eight nuclear powers. By then, as Raymond Aron says, we may look back with nostalgia to the bi-polarised world.

2. Even if the arms race is stabilised in a decade when the more sophisticated missiles and Polaris submarine give each side a complete, permanent, and demonstrable stranglehold upon each other's jugulars, it will have constituted the most colossal waste of human effort since the building of the Pyramids. The National Planning Association in Washington has calculated in a recent publication (*1970 Without Arms Control*) that if the present trend continues the world will over the next twelve years spend between $1,500,000 million and $2,000,000 million on armaments—of which the United States and Russia would account for a third each.

3. The gradual progress towards strategic stability, through the placing of missiles in submarines and deep underground sites, will, at the same time, make an agreement to terminate the race through any system of international inspection technically more complex and politically harder to accept. Already, the advent of the easily-camouflaged missile-site in place of the airfield has rendered obsolete any international inspection plan based on aerial reconnaissance alone. How could any international authority check on the movements of a nuclear submarine, with Polaris missiles, which can sit under the Polar Icecap for two months, or traverse all the seven seas without surfacing? Each step forward towards making the deterrent more inviolable and the Soviet/American strategic equation more secure, will involve a larger and larger abrogation of national sovereignty in order to subordinate the war-making capacity of either to any form of international control.

4. If the arms race is allowed to run the full course that technology is charting for it, it will have a profoundly corrupting effect on both sides. What it will do to Russia no one can foretell; but I should have thought that, if the reports of the secret Gaither Report in the United States are correct, namely, that the Soviet Union is devoting 25 per cent of her national income to defence, such a diversion of resources must over the years frustrate many of the tendencies towards a more liberal or flexible social and economic pattern of which the developments of the last few years have given a hope. But the effect on the United States and its Western allies of a continuing preoccupation with surprise attack is likely to be more damaging, not in economic terms, but in generating an atmosphere of perpetual tension, a loss of political control, and a diversion of public attention from the really important objectives (which Mr. Crossman has underlined): a capacity for limited war and the resources for economic aid. In so far as it would be the United States who would bear the main brunt, in every sense, of keeping abreast with Russia in the fantastic world of missiles, anti-missile missiles, Polaris submarines and the like, the contest will tend to widen the gulf of aim and understanding that has developed in recent years between America and her allies, and put her alliances in the worst possible position to withstand the strains of the new age. I am not talking about Quemoy, for a wiser leadership in Washington could do a good deal to redress the distrust. I am thinking more of the steady sacrifice of national independence which America's allies must make if they are to participate in the highly-integrated defence-system, centred on the United States as the strategic heart of the alliance, which the missile age will demand. The recent suggestions of General de Gaulle and Field-Marshal Montgomery, which amount to the same thing, namely, an impassioned demand that America's allies be given

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a seat in the central control room, show that the disease is making headway.

In short, I do not fear that the arms race will of itself lead to nuclear war, though there is a period immediately ahead when the chances of an accident will be too high to make any form of "brinkmanship" permissible. Nor do I think that one side can now gain a decisive advantage over the other. But neither of these facts creates any argument for ignoring the profoundly harmful effect that it is likely to have, not only upon the major participants, but upon the whole world, in petrifying the natural process of change, very probably in leading to restrictions on individual liberty in the democratic countries, and certainly in leading to restrictions on the independence of states within the two defence systems—galling for America's allies, crushing for the Soviet satellites—by the necessity of giving a virtually overriding priority to military considerations whose full impact even the experts can only dimly apprehend.

"DISENGAGEMENT" in Europe to which Messrs. Crossman, Strachey, and Ignotus each make a formal bob at the end of their articles would have little bearing on this problem. Strategically it would have been a step of crucial importance in the early nineteen-fifties when Europe was the focus of Soviet/American tension, and even now the West would suffer no crucial damage, strategically or politically, if it were negotiated. But to-day when the United States and Russia confront each other directly across the Arctic wastes, across the Bering Sea and Greenland's icy mountains, when the stakes are much too high for either to be drawn into war by a scuffle in Berlin or on the Elbe, it is one of a number of desirable objectives but no more. When a real measure of "disengagement" in Europe does take place, it is more likely to be the effect than the cause of a much wider agreement between the United States and Russia.

Nor have I much optimism about the negotiation of a comprehensive disarmament plan, of the kind to which both sides gave lip-service until the breakdown of the London talks in August 1957. Indeed, what I fear is that any specific agreements which may be negotiated in the immediate future may deceive the world into thinking that greater progress towards a secure world is being achieved than is, in reality, the case. For the agreements likely to be concluded in the present state of mind of the leaders of both sides are certain to be merely the codification of limitations that can be accepted because they are now irrelevant. Thus, it may now be possible to negotiate an agreement on the suspension of nuclear tests, for no better reason than the fact that the three leading nuclear powers are no longer vitally dependent on them. I have no doubt that, in two years or so, it will be possible to get agreement on the "cut-off" of nuclear-weapon production, so heatedly debated in earlier negotiations; but this may only register the fact that the nuclear powers have more bombs than they need and are running out of storage-space. They might be significant in preventing the spread of nuclear weapon industries to smaller countries—they would have little effect on the central problem.

WHAT would give me more confidence than any formal return to the green baize table would be a steady change of perspective in Moscow, Washington, and London. As Aron says, "States will only succeed in outlawing modern weapons when they exclude the hypothesis of a big war, and not vice versa." When the tired and limited figures on either side bring themselves to study the future trend of the arms race, the waste of resources it will involve, the kind of world it will have produced by 1970, the unbreakable stranglehold they already have upon each other —above all the way in which their increasingly menacing mutual glare at each other over the top of the Northern Hemisphere weakens their position within their own alliances and increases the possibility that some irresponsible ally may draw them into war against their will—then it is possible that we shall see some progress. This would involve no ringing declarations, no impossible agreement to rule or divide the world, no chest-beating that "there is now no alternative to peace," merely a quiet recognition that wherever else there may be conflict, the world has moved beyond the point at which a Russian/American war could be the solution to anything. I believe that American public opinion is now ready to look this fact squarely in the eye, if its political leadership would educate it to the true facts of America's lost invulnerability. How far the Russians are prepared to acknowledge this I have no means of judging, but perhaps the Quemoy crisis with its evidence of just how intransigent an ally they have in the Chinese, with the real alarm it has clearly caused in Moscow, may have accelerated this process of agonising reappraisal. (In the West also, the growing evidence of China's implacability and power, her ability to shrug off the threat of nuclear devastation as Russia can now only pretend to, must give rise to second thoughts about the wisdom of becoming locked in an arms race with another semi-Western power when the global balance might one day turn against both of them.) Unilateral nuclear disarmament would, of course, fatally arrest this mutal process of facing up to the truth.

And the first sign of a useful change of attitude that I would look for would be negotia-

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tions, not on so difficult a task as dismantling the existing weapons-systems of either side, but on the control of the total-war weapons of the future, most of which are already quite predictable. It is much easier—indeed, probably nothing else is possible—to agree not to produce what is still only on the drawing-board (or a gleam in the scientist's eye) than to dismantle any weapon or means of defence which has become embedded in a nation's security system. The tragedy of to-day is that it is very hard to conceive such an approach being made by either side during the next two years, and so swift is the pace of change at present that several important weapons (such as the Polaris submarine) will have passed from the drawing-board into actual production. Because we have had our eyes raised either too high or too low, the moment when we could have got the ICBM under control—the moment, that is, when both sides were known to be developing it but before the Chiefs-of-Staff on either side had become dependent on it—has already gone; a year or two more of delay may put the space platform in the same category. If the trends of the future can be checked by mutual agreement, then the tacit identity of attitude of which such agreement will be the symptom, opens a reasonable prospect of stabilising the level of mutual deterrence at a lower and lower, instead of a higher and higher level. Of moving, that is, from the active to the passive stage of deterrence. For this reason the outcome of the Geneva conference on surprise attack is more meaningful than that on the ending of nuclear tests.

WHAT part can Britain play in this process? Perhaps the first step would be to abandon any assumption of superior wisdom. Mr. Crossman writes that "the British Government, under Mr. Attlee's and Mr. Churchill's leadership, had attempted, while developing British nuclear weapons, to counteract the extremism of American nuclear thinking." And again, "whereas the nuclear obsession is deeply rooted in the American environment, it is foreign to Britain." This is not wholly true. In the aftermath of the Korean war, the British Chiefs-of-Staff were set down to the task of evolving a strategic doctrine which would make a similar eruption unlikely or impossible in future. They came back with a paper suggesting that the Western powers should declare that, in the case of any future aggression, they would not only withstand it at the point of attack but would retaliate massively with means of their own choosing against the aggressor's central nervous system. (An idea that still made great military sense when Russia's nuclear capacity was only conjectural.) Since Britain, at that time, possessed neither the aircraft nor the bombs to translate this policy into reality, the paper was forwarded with commendation to Washington, where it was rejected by General Bradley, the then Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs-of-Staff. However, when General Bradley gave way a year later to Admiral Radford, the British paper was resuscitated by an Administration committed to "no more Koreas" and "a bigger bang for a buck," and formed the basis of Mr. Dulles' famous declaration of January 1954.

Nor is it wise to perpetuate any myth that it has been British caution alone which has hauled America back from the nuclear brink in past crises. It was the opposition, again, of Generals Bradley and Marshall to the use of atomic weapons in Korea which finally carried the day with President Truman, as much as Mr. Attlee's flying visit. Over Indo-China, the opposition of General Ridgway, the Chief-of-Staff of the U.S. Army, to intervention at Dien-Bien-Phu, with or without nuclear weapons, was every bit as adamant as that of the British Government, and much more effective, because only he could provide the ground forces to follow it up. In the recent Quemoy crisis the State Department's adverse domestic mail has weighed, I am certain, as heavily with Mr. Dulles and his political friends in Congress as the opposition of his allies.

My point is that there are, within American official and public opinion, natural correctives to America's natural mistakes, and these are as powerful as anything we can apply. In the last year alone, we have seen the remarkable political performance of Congress insisting, over the wishes of a soldier-President, that the Administration take the problem of limited war more seriously and increase the effectiveness of the (politically unpopular) ground forces.

What we can do is to put our own thoughts in order. The revival of the doctrine of massive retaliation in Mr. Sandys' 1957 Defence White Paper did an immense amount of harm, not only to our position in NATO, but in strengthening the forces of obscurantism in the Pentagon, and very probably in Moscow too. It convinced many sober people in France that it was essential to have a nuclear weapon industry in order to be taken seriously by the great powers. The reduction of our contribution to the NATO shield has come at the very moment when General Norstad has been trying to develop the more flexible strategy which the great power thermo-nuclear stalemate necessitates. The Conservative Government's overriding desire to abolish conscription has forced them to set a ceiling on our future army which will prove inadequate, unless we recast our policy in the Far East, the Persian Gulf, and in NATO, and are content with a

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diminished influence there. With our long-range ballistic missile we have embarked upon an attempt to cut into the Soviet/American arms race at a point in time of our own choosing, ignoring the fact that, since we cannot afford to develop a continuous "weapons system"—the complex diversity of projectiles and the defences against them, fuels, launching vehicles, electronics, etc.—our isolated contributions run a high risk of proving technically obsolete and strategically irrelevant even before they are produced. Finally, the Government has shown the value it sets on its own concept of "interdependence"—by entirely changing the rôle of Britain's contribution to NATO's increasingly important naval defences in the Atlantic without consulting anyone.

IT SEEMS to me that a more clear-eyed appreciation of our own interest, both in survival and in maintaining our influence, should embrace the following propositions:

1. The British bomb has been principally aimed at Washington, not Moscow. Since we possess neither the stocks nor the aircraft to cover all the major target-areas of the Soviet bloc, we do not of ourselves possess the means of deterring Russia from a thermonuclear attack on us (especially if she is prepared to accept the degree of damage which Mr. Worsthorne implies). Similarly, it cannot be used to deter Russia from threatening our interests in other parts of the world—unless we are backed up by the United States—because we ourselves could be utterly destroyed. It was intended to give us greater influence over American policy even though, in terms of our ability to destroy Soviet targets, our strength is no more than six per cent of that of the Americans. The new element that has been introduced by the technological advances of recent years is a revolution in the means of delivering atomic and hydrogen bombs. In this we cannot hope to keep pace with the two superpowers, and the strength we can deploy at this stratospheric level will most probably decline. However, the British nuclear-weapon programme has achieved one of its most important aims, namely, the repeal of those sections of the Macmahon Act which prevented us from receiving information on American developments, or discussing any plan which involved the Strategic Air Force. We are now for the first time in a position to exercise our influence over American strategy in the way that has always been most effective, namely, quietly and day-by-day from within the private councils of the alliance.

Now that we have access to these private councils, the case for modifying the policy of an independent nuclear deterrent or diverting it to a military purpose, such as nuclear propulsion, more suited to our real needs, is becoming stronger every day. The problem is to find the most useful context for so doing, namely, the largest *quid pro quo* from other nations. I personally do not think any British gesture would have a bearing on the course of the Soviet/American arms race, but we alone have the means of convincing the other middle powers, France, Sweden, Germany, Israel, India, and Japan, of the strategic futility of embarking on a nuclear weapon programme unless they are also prepared to develop the means of delivery, to join the even more costly club of the owners of supersonic bombers, missiles, counter missile systems and the like. Unfortunately, there is virtually no chance of our arguments carrying any weight with the most important of the future nuclear powers, Communist China. But it is not impossible that when China finally shows that she does possess the capacity to manufacture atomic bombs (some American estimates put the date no further than three years away), Russia, who has hitherto regarded the problem of fourth, fifth, and successive nuclear powers as largely an embarrassment for the West, may be induced to take it seriously.

2. If it be accepted that wars fought for limited objectives with conventional forces are for the foreseeable future a much more likely contingency than a deliberately planned global war, the strength of our own forces must obviously depend on a reassessment of three factors: the points of greatest danger, the areas in which we wish to exert a continuing influence, and the areas and situations in which force of any kind is now unusable. At present it is being calculated from a quite different factor: what conventional force we can afford, given the fact that we must keep up in the nuclear arms race and wish to abolish conscription. I should have thought that the hastiest survey would suggest that we must at all costs retain our influence in Europe and especially in the counsels of NATO; this suggests a contribution of perhaps six divisions to the NATO shield forces, in place of the weak two-and-a-half to which they are now being reduced. (This would give Britain the influence she lacks at present over the question of distributing tactical atomic weapons.) In the Middle East, I would have thought that the events of the last two years have made it difficult to evade the conclusion that any Western *use* of force—which is not the same as exploiting the *potential* use of force as a diplomatic weapon—does more harm to our interests in the long run, than any short-term stability it produces could justify. Whether the final answer necessitates a continuation of conscription, justifies the experiment of a volunteer army and air force, or, more probably, necessitates some form of selective service on the

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American pattern, I do not know. But the ends must be settled before the means can be argued intelligently.

Both propositions involve a much more radical approach to defence planning than either party is yet willing to undertake, for both still wish to have their atomic bomb and eat it. Yet in the crucial years ahead, when the West's weakness in conventional forces may become painfully apparent, the field in which Britain could really pioneer, where she could earn an influence which her position as a rather fustian nuclear power could never win for her, is in new ways of raising and equipping mobile troops—taking a leaf perhaps from the book of Israel or Switzerland. Our own system has not been fundamentally overhauled for half a century.

BUT no real progress is possible until the grand debate on the tactical atomic weapon is resolved. For my own part, I find Mr. Henry Kissinger's advocacy of their widespread employment as unrealistic as the belief of Mr. Crossman that their use will lead straight to total war. To take refuge in theoretical dogma is to play the adversary's game. At the moment they are coveted by America's allies much more as a means of committing the United States to their defence, now that the strategic stalemate is diminishing the credibility of the overall American nuclear deterrent. In other words, they are thought of much more for their strategic than for their tactical value. My own feeling is that the small atomic weapons, used purely in the battlefield, and by small I mean small (the atomic artillery or bazooka shell, not the twenty-kiloton bomb), provide neither a panacea for our weakness, nor an invitation, if rightly used, to *Goetterdaemmerung*. Regarded as a panacea, they lull Western statesmen into thinking that they can fill the gap left by the same statesmen's failure to build efficient standing armies. Regarded as the string of the shower bath, they impose an absurd rigidity on Western planning, which the Russians (whose forces are being rapidly trained in their use while Soviet propaganda declares them to be unusable) will not respect. My own preference is for Raymond Aron's pragmatism:

> It seems to me desirable that the Western powers should keep sufficient conventional weapons to conduct operations, in case of need, without resorting to nuclear explosives. But it does not seem to me intellectually correct, or politically opportune, to assert that nothing could stop a total war the moment the atomic taboo was violated. . . .

Given a world that is still largely uncommitted, I can conceive of very few situations at present in which the military advantage of using atomic weapons tactically—that is, to turn a local military embroilment to one's favour—would outweigh the political disadvantages. (The destruction of the Amoy guns and Fukien airfields threatening Quemoy is a text-book example.) I can conceive of one or two situations—a Chinese attack on Malaya, for instance—in which their use would have to be quickly and seriously considered. To train sailors, soldiers, and airmen to depend on them (as our own staff colleges are beginning to do), to make them standard equipment (as the Americans are doing), seems to me as politically unrealistic as it is militarily unrealistic to ignore them.

A SANE doctrine to attest policies on both sides that aim merely at the accretion of offensive power and which diminish the flexibility of both, depends on more than pragmatism. It means acceptance of the paradox of force. The more there is available the less readily it can be used. For the shadow of the Soviet/American arms race hangs over every change in the world's pulse-beat, even an exchange of shots between a Marine and Lebanese rebel in a Beirut side-street. It means recognising the truth that earlier centuries knew, that it is the *ends* of conflict not the *means* that govern their savagery or extent, or, as Aron puts it, "the amplification of a local conflict would result rather from *strategic* extremism than from extreme weapons." To be able to use tactical atomic weapons or even strong conventional forces means, at any rate for a West that is largely isolated in an afraid and uncommitted world, the search for a new authority for the use of force, based on a declaratory policy which makes it the temporary servant rather than the permanent master of diplomacy and negotiation.

The future historian may reflect on the fateful paradox that it took the development of unlimited destructive power to make the men of the 20th century use force with the restraint and discrimination which came naturally to their 18th-century ancestors. If they do not, he may not exist.

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Richard Rumbold

Catching the Mood of the Universe

A Personal Experience of Zen Buddhism

Notre pâle raison cache l'infini.
RIMBAUD

IN THE early spring of 1956 I became a lay-brother—what the Japanese call *koji*—in a Zen Buddhist monastery at Kyoto, the old Imperial Capital of Japan. Before coming to Japan I had lived for a year and a half in Ceylon where I studied an altogether different, and certainly more orthodox, form of Buddhism known as Theravada —The Doctrine of the Elders—which is followed today in Ceylon, Burma, and Thailand. In the West we are apt to lump Buddhists together as a whole, but in fact they are divided into many sects which vary enormously from one another, both in their philosophical conceptions and their practices.

Whilst Theravada Buddhism stems directly from the Indian tradition, Zen—a much later sect—is largely a creation of the Chinese, and the difference between them reflects to some extent the difference between the Indian and the Chinese mind. Theravada is abstract, aloof, metaphysical, other-worldly; Zen concrete, practical, life-affirming, this-worldly. Despite its apparently fantastic techniques—it has with truth been described as the strangest spiritual experience which the Far East offers—Zen is imbued with the quizzical, yet profoundly relevant, worldly-wisdom of the Chinese. To that extent it probably has more to say to the West than any other form of Buddhism.

The germinal ideas of Zen can be traced back to the later Indian Buddhist commentators, notably Nagarjuna (3rd century A.D.), whose famous Doctrine of the Void has certain parallels in Christian spirituality*; and it was another Indian, the Madrasi scholar-monk Bodhidarma, who is said to have introduced these ideas into China *circa* A.D. 520. But it was the genius of the

* For instance, these two quotations—one from the famous commentary of Father Augustine Baker, a 17th-century Benedictine, on *The Cloud of Unknowing*, the other from Father Baker's treatise called *Remains*—would be regarded, I think, by Zen Buddhists as a fair description of the Doctrine of the Void, except that a Zen Buddhist would not use the terms "God" or "soul."

(1) "The nought here mentioned is God, to whom the soul may be united when she is nowhere bodily, nor hath in her any image of creatures. And when she is nowhere bodily then she is everywhere spiritually; and being in such condition she is fit to be united with the said nothing, which also is in all places. In reality this is a union of spirits, of the man's spirit with God's spirit, there being in neither of them any bodily image or thing. And this union I have elsewhere called a union of nothing with nothing."

(2) "And when she (the soul) being in such case of nothing, apprehending God also as nothing—that is, as no imaginable or intelligible thing, but as another thing which is above all images and species, and is expressible by no species . . . doth further apply and add her foresaid nothing to the said nothing of God, then remaineth there, neither in respect of the soul nor in respect of God, anything but a certain vacuity or nothing. In which nothing is acted and passeth a union between God and the soul. . . . And so in this case of union there is nothing and nothing and they make nothing. . . . This is the state of perfect union which is termed by some a state of nothing and by others with as much reason termed a state of totality. . . ."

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Chinese which brought them down to earth, transforming them into a monastic discipline, a practical lay way of life, and one of the most powerful cultural forces in the Far East. To the Chinese scholar of those days Zen appealed as an earthly mysticism akin in several ways to his own native Taoism, and by the time of the Southern Sung dynasty (1127–1279) Zen monasteries had become the leading centres of Chinese scholarship, as well as the inspiration behind the scholarly pursuits of poetry, painting, and calligraphy.

At this same period, when Japan was succumbing to the charms of Chinese culture even as seven hundred years later she fell under the spell of Western technology, the Japanese monk Eisai founded the first Zen monastery in Kyoto. Eisai also brought from China and planted the first seeds of the tea-shrub which led to the tea-ceremony becoming, as in China, one of the recognised Zen rituals. In Japan the influence of Zen has since been immense in artistic, cultural, and even in political life. "To a certain extent," says Sir Charles Eliot in his *Japanese Buddhism*, "it has moulded the Japanese character, but it is also the expression of that character. No other form of Buddhism is so thoroughly Japanese." In Japan today, as well as in monasteries in Korea, Zen still flourishes.

In the West, where thought tends to be either Marxist-materialistic or Christian-supernatural or somewhere between the two, it is difficult to envisage a religion not based on transcendental hopes and promises. But Zen is the flower of the Chinese genius: at once shrewd and poetic, not metaphysical like the Indian, nor split between materialism and supernaturalism as in the Christian West. Hence it teaches us to regard this life as the only significant spiritual experience in which we must learn to live—and die—in harmony with the Tao: the Mood of the Universe.

THE Zen monastery of Shokokuji is situated in the outskirts of Kyoto, and the first thing that struck me about it was its size; its compound, extending to several acres, contained numerous temples, buildings, and gardens. In Ceylon I had become accustomed to little *viharas* consisting of a lodging-house for perhaps half-a-dozen monks, a shrine-room with a statue of the Buddha, and a breast-shaped *stupa*, tucked away in a coconut plantation. But Shokokuji was on the scale of the great Christian monasteries of medieval Europe.

In the centre of the compound was the main temple, a beautiful carved wooden pavilion-like building, where supporters of the monastery gave banquets on festivals and anniversaries. In Japan the Buddhist monastery is still to some extent the centre of social and cultural life, and many of the schools of flower-arrangement and tea-ceremony are held in these temples, since the Flower Masters and Tea Masters are often Buddhist monks. In this main temple we assembled to chant the sutras in Japanese in a rapid flowing monotone to the rhythmic accompaniment of muffled beating on a *mokugyo*—a wooden drum shaped like a fat-bellied fish—and the tinkling of a triangle. Japanese is a pretty language because, like Italian, most of the words end in vowels, and it was always exciting to hear it flow to the deep sound of the drum and the high-pitched note of the triangle.

In a corner of the compound, shut off from the public by a high, encircling wall, was the *Sodo*. The *Sodo* is the heart and pulse of the Zen monastery, and it consists of a group of buildings the most important of which is the *Zendo* or meditation-hall. Inside the *Zendo*, a large rectangular building, there is a raised platform running along its four sides, and on this platform or *tan*, as it is called in Japanese, the monks sit for meditation. Like the floors of Japanese houses, the *tan* is covered with rice-straw or *tatami*, and to each monk is assigned the space of one strip of *tatami*, six feet by three. The younger monks usually sleep in the *Zendo*, and during the daytime they stow away their *futon*—the wadded quilt stuffed with cotton-wool which serves the Japanese for a bed—behind the sliding-screens at the back of the *tan*.

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As Zen believes that enlightenment is a direct, inward, intuitive experience, the worship of images is discouraged as leading to external distraction, and there is a famous Zen story of a novice who watches with horror as his Zen Master, on a freezing winter's evening, burns up a statue of the Buddha for firewood. In the *Zendo*, however, there is a single shrine, like a pulpit with steps leading up to it, in which stands the image of the legendary *bodhisattva* Manjusri. Manjusri, a symbol of insight, is usually depicted with a sword which cuts through intellectual entanglements to reveal the light of intuitive wisdom. Before meditation begins, the head monk prostrates himself three times with forehead to the ground before this shrine which stands in the centre of the hall.

The *Sodo* also includes the apartments of the Zen Master, or *Roshi*, the spiritual head of the monastery, responsible for the progress towards enlightenment of all the monks and novices; the small wooden chalet-like dwellings of the various monastic officials, for instance of the *jikijitsu*, or head-monk, responsible for discipline in the *Zendo*, and of his assistant, the *tanto* (literally "head of the *tan*"); and the cookhouse. It is said that when the first Indian Buddhist monks reached China, the Chinese were astonished to find that they expected to do no manual labour, but in Zen monasteries work in fields, gardens, and in the monastery itself emphasises the relationship of Zen to practical everyday living. One of the most honoured callings is that of cook, and Zen cooking, though vegetarian, has a deserved reputation throughout Japan. The cook-monk at Shokokuji, whose name was Asai, was one of my best friends, and in my possession is a book of his Zen ink-drawings, many of which illustrate the shock of enlightenment with a pleasing humour. As Mr. Christmas Humphreys has pointed out, Zen is the only religion in which laughter plays a part.

A novice enters the *Sodo* initially for three years' training, and after that he may return to the world, or, if he feels sufficiently dedicated, remain in the *Sodo* as a fully-fledged monk. Alternatively, he may take an administrative job associated with the monastery, when he will be given charge of one of the minor temples, lecture on Zen, and perform ceremonies on anniversary occasions for the lay supporters of his temple. On my visits to the *Zendo* I would watch the reception given to a newly-arrived novice, which was always one of calculated inhospitality, the object being to test his powers of will and endurance without which no *satori*—the Zen equivalent of enlightenment or *nirvana*—is possible.

In the old days the novice always travelled on foot from his native village: the rigours of such a journey, especially in winter, were believed to sharpen his awareness of suffering, impelling him to ask those heart-searching questions about life which he hopes his Zen training will elucidate. Today, however, he probably comes by train. On arrival he presents a letter from his local Zen temple, but is politely turned away, the most usual excuse being that the monastery is too full to take him. If he persists, he is thrown out by force. He then waits outside in the entrance-court, but will be given food and shelter for the night which, however, he must pass in meditation: sleep is out of the question for a man tormented by the riddle of existence. Next day he waits again, presenting a rather pathetic spectacle as he leans dejectedly, with half-closed eyes, over a bundle containing his belongings; he wears heavy travelling-clothes and straw sandals. This period of probation —known as *niwa-dzume* (literally "occupying the entrance-court")—may last a day or two.

Many Zen practices have the dynamic liberating force of a Dionysiac ritual, and had I been obliged to force my way into the *Sodo*, I daresay it would have helped to break down my conceptual resistances. But being a European I fared otherwise. As I knew little Japanese I had first of all to find a Zen monk who spoke English which I eventually did in Mr. Sohaku Ogata, the incumbent of one of the minor temples, which was called Chotoku-in. In this temple I

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stayed for four months while I participated in the monastic routine.

I lived in the Japanese style. My room was bare, except for a low, red-lacquered table with cushions round it on the floor, a flower arrangement in an alcove, and a kakemono (scroll painting) hanging from the wall: on the kakemono, drawn in brush-work, was an empty circle, the Zen symbol of infinity, and beside the circle some Zen verses, the ideograms coursing down the scroll like dripping icicles. The room was divided off from the other rooms by sliding-screens, but on one side it looked on to a closed-in verandah, like those which encircle Japanese houses, and there I placed a writing-table and a chair—the sole concession to my European needs. Beyond the verandah was the garden, and in summer I slid back the screens so that I was able to live, both day and night, as in a half-open summer-house.

My host, Mr. Ogata, was in his middle fifties. A sturdy, thick-set man, he had a large, bullet-shaped head, which was clean-shaven, as is the custom with Buddhist monks. He wore the Zen robe, a black kimono with a little apron, like a Mason's apron, dangling in front. In spirit as well as in years he belonged to the older generation of Japanese, and he frequently lamented—not without reason—the disintegration of the old culture and in particular of the observance by the young of *giri*—the obligation owed particularly to parents, teachers, and superiors generally. As a young man Mr. Ogata had been through the discipline of the *Sodo*, and he sometimes gave me the impression that he would not have been averse from using its shock-tactics on me. When a Japanese likes you he wants, more likely than not, to shape and mould you, even as a Flower Master will lovingly bend and twist a sprig of cherry-blossom to give it the effect of perfect naturalness. As a French woman tourist once exclaimed to me in a flower-arrangement school in Kyoto: *"Comme ils ont l'habitude de torturer les fleurs!"*

I irritated Mr. Ogata on the day of my arrival when he was showing me round his temple garden. It was a pretty garden, so quiet and so Japanese, with the maple trees just coming into leaf; all delicate reds and golds. In one corner there was a small bamboo wood whose tall green stems were swaying together in the breeze, and on the ground, between the stems, moss spread bright and green and thick. But there were no flowers to be seen.

"Why is this?" I asked Ogata.

"You seldom see flowers in Zen gardens," he replied. He then explained that when in the 13th-century Zen reached Japan, the ideals of Japanese landscape gardening underwent a profound change. The Zen monks, themselves keen gardeners, discouraged ornate tendencies—flowering shrubs, lacquered bridges, and other ornamental devices—as being inconsistent with the spirit of Zen.

"How," I asked innocently, "are they inconsistent?"

"Because," he replied sharply, "they distract the mind from inward contemplation, tempting it towards outer show and glory and leading it into dualistic thinking."

"What exactly is dualistic thinking?" was my next question. Whereupon Ogata turned upon me with exasperation and exclaimed: "You ask altogether too many questions which goes to show that you have no Zen in you. You are as useless a subject for Zen as a weed is to my garden!"

His remarks, however, had given me my first important Zen insight. Zen sees man's alienation not as due to original sin, but to the limitation of intellectual and conceptual thinking which creates the illusion of a dichotomy in the universe. As W. H. Auden has beautifully put it in his poem *The Riddle*:

"Underneath the leaves of life,
Green on the prodigious tree,
In a trance of grief
Stand the fallen man and wife:
Far away the single stag
Banished to a lonely crag
Gazes placid out to sea,
And from thickets round about
Breeding animals look in

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On Duality,
And the birds fly in and out
Of the world of man."

The aim of Zen meditation and techniques is to overcome this duality, in other words, to release man from the prison of concepts, thus restoring what Dr. Suzuki calls "the experience of original inseparability."* Again, Auden expresses it in *New Year Letter*:

"... The intellect
That parts the Cause from the Effect
And thinks in terms of Space and Time
Commits a legalistic crime,
For such an unreal severance
Must falsify experience.
Could one not almost say that the
Cold serpent on the poisonous tree
Was l'esprit de géométrie,
That Eve and Adam till the Fall
Were totally illogical,
But as they tasted of the fruit
The syllogistic sin took root?"

Moreover, Zen sees man not only as the slave of his concepts, but also of the language in which he expresses these concepts; and, consequently, it attempts to transmit enlightenment directly from one mind to another, from Master to disciple, without the intermediary of dogma, doctrine, and, as far as possible, even of language. Once again part of Auden's poem *Kairos and Logos* conveys exactly this experience:

"He woke one morning and the verbal truth
He went to bed with was no longer there;
The years of reading fell away; his eyes
Beheld the weight and contours of the earth...."

"His eyes beheld the weight and contours of the earth": this is the very essence of the Zen goal of enlightenment—of its intuitive unified vision—which in Japanese is called *satori*.

WHEREAS the more traditional Theravada Buddhism regards enlightenment as the result of having practised increasing non-attachment through successive rebirths, Zen, a far more dynamic Buddhism, claims that it is in essence a sudden, mystical illumination which occurs in a lightning-flash; furthermore, that any disciple can with persistence attain it. The methods normally followed are, firstly, meditation in the *Zendo* which is known as *Za-zen* (meditation is, of course, the life-blood of Buddhism, as prayer is of Christianity); secondly, the interview with the Master or *Roshi* wherein the disciple presents each day, and sometimes oftener, the fruits of his meditation—this is called *San-zen*; and, thirdly, in certain Zen monasteries, the use of "shock-effects," notably beatings with the *keisaku* (literally "staff of admonition") or stick. This training I myself now began to follow out.

Before allowing me to take my place in the *Zendo*, however, the *Roshi* sent word that he wished to see me, and so, feeling rather apprehensive, I walked across to the *Sodo* one morning with Mr. Ogata who acted as my interpreter.

The *Roshi* is deeply revered by all his monks, not only because he himself has many times experienced *satori*, though probably at varying levels of the mind, but because he is master of the complicated techniques for bringing it about in others. He may combine his spiritual duties with the administrative control of the monastery, but as a rule this control is left to an Abbot; the work of the *Roshi* is sufficiently nervously exacting without added burdens. The Abbot of Shokokuji was an octogenarian whom I recollect seeing but once: he came one night into the *Zendo* while we were meditating there, and he was accompanied by three monks carrying paper lanterns to light his way. Since the Meiji restoration of 1868, when Japan was opened up to the West, Zen monks have been allowed to marry and rear families, but the *Roshi* is often celibate, as indeed are most Buddhist monks. The *Roshis* select their most promising disciples to

* Dr. D. T. Suzuki is the greatest living exponent of Zen, and this article owes an immense debt to his works.

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succeed them, and to these disciples they transmit their wisdom and methods.

The relationship between *Roshi* and monk is one of rare and indescribable intimacy comparable to that between a psycho-analyst and his patient. Like the analyst, he relies partly on a highly developed intuition to guess what is going on in the dark recesses of the disciple's mind and also to break down the resistances in it. "Tat Tvam Asi" ("Thou Art That"), say the Upanishads, which is precisely the experience of *satori*: the instantaneous fusion of self and not-self, of microcosm and macrocosm, which omits all selection, discrimination, and conceptualism, and wherein there is no time for the dualism of observer and observed to arise. "Pray, pacify my mind," demanded the disciple. "Where is your mind?" said the *Roshi*, "bring it out and show me." "That's impossible," replied the disciple. "There!" exclaimed the *Roshi*, "I have pacified your mind." The disciple was clinging on obstinately to this concept of "mind." Similarly, in the well-known Zen story of two monks who were crossing a river, one of whom espied a girl in mid-stream, picked her up on his shoulder, and carried her to the opposite bank. The monks then went on their way, but half an hour later one said to the other: "Surely it was wrong of you to pick up that girl?" "I dropped her half an hour ago," replied the other; "are you still holding her?"

It is the task of Zen, and of the *Roshi* in particular, to open up for the pupil in a flash of illumination the "chasm" existing between his thought-processes and the Absolute from which these thought-processes divide him—the "unreal severance" of Auden's poem. But to do so the *Roshi* must first break down the disciple's resistance—the resistance which makes him cling to his concepts of things, so as to prevent his "unification" with the thing-in-itself: the "suchness" of things. For the disciple this breaking-down process is a perilous adventure in the realm of spirit; his mind must first of all be emptied of all thoughts and images; and consequently he seems, metaphorically speaking, on the brink of a precipice over which he must make a leap into what appears to be existential nothingness. At this critical moment it is the action of the *Roshi* who, perhaps by a word, or a gesture, or a blow with the *keisaku*, forces him to make this leap. I once asked the head monk why he used the stick so frequently, and he likened his action to that of a bird which, in order to make its young fly, has to tumble them out of the nest.

CONTRARY to my fears, the interview passed off easily. After slipping off our shoes we waited in the ceremonial tea-room, whose sliding screens were open, revealing a miniature garden with dwarf evergreen-trees. Presently, the monk in attendance informed us that the *Roshi* would receive us. We followed him along a series of passages, and found ourselves in the presence of an oldish man, unusually tall for a Japanese, wearing a bluish kimono; he was seated on a large cushion in the double lotus position. Beside him was his staff or *keisaku*, as well as a small hand-bell which he rings to terminate an interview. On reaching the threshold of the room we bowed from the waist, and then on entering it we fell on our knees and touched the floor with our foreheads. The Japanese are quick and intuitive and live very much in their senses, judging a man's character far more than we by the minutiae of his external behaviour, and the *Roshi*, it is said, can determine a disciple's progress from the sound of his footsteps on the *tatami* as he comes along the passage, as well as from his prostrations in the room. The monks perform these prostrations with grace, symmetrical precision, and quiet abnegation like an athletic work of art.

The *Roshi* asked me one or two questions about my interest in Buddhism which I answered as briefly as possible. Mr. Ogata had warned me of a certain American woman who, on being taken to see a Zen Master, tried to gather his views on the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and kindred problems. Whereupon,

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interrupting, he told her to write down all these problems, and a few days later when she returned with a large sheaf of papers, his only comment was: "What a bonfire they will make!"

Apparently satisfied with my replies, the *Roshi* invited me to sit with crossed legs, instead of in the formal kneeling position, and then the assistant brought in the ceremonial green tea, a mushy bitter beverage used in the tea-ceremony, which we took with soya-bean cakes; we were careful to finger and admire the tea-bowls and implements. We then left.

That evening I took my place in the meditation-hall, accompanied by a young Swiss psychiatrist, Fedor Bachmann, like myself a Zen student. Fedor had learnt Japanese while serving on the Neutral Control Commission in Korea, and without his guidance my first impressions of the *Zendo* would have been still more bewildering.

As the early part of the day was given to monastic chores, including the daily begging-round through the streets, meditation lasted normally from early evening till ten or eleven at night. But once a month there was a whole week during which we were supposed to meditate more or less continuously with only short breaks for sleep and food. These periods were a nervous ordeal since the *jikijitsu* would urge us to make a special effort to gain *satori*, at the same time using his stick freely; and by the middle of the week the monks had become glassy-eyed with excitement, tension and fatigue, like soldiers in the thick of battle.

Before entering the *Zendo* we would take off our socks and *getas*—the wooden clogs traditionally worn by the Japanese—and put on straw-sandals; once, omitting to do this, I clop-clopped into the hall until the *jikijitsu*, a man with a long, beaky nose, pulled me up with a fierce hiss. We then took off the sandals, and hoisting ourselves on to the *tan* (platform) composed ourselves for meditation; my place was between Fedor and a Japanese *koji* (lay-brother). The monks sat round the rest of the *tan* in long, serried rows, like waxwork effigies; their backs erect, their legs crossed in the double lotus, their hands folded on their laps, their hermetic slit-eyed faces fixed on the middle distance. It is wrong both to open the eyes fully, which tempts to external distraction, or to shut them altogether because of the danger of drowsiness.

A WOODEN gong was struck, and as the sounds became louder and quicker, rising to an exciting crescendo, the *jikijitsu* left the *tan* and prostrated himself before the shrine of Manjusri. He then returned to his place and lit an incense-stick which burnt out in half-an-hour—the length of each meditation-period. After this a pair of wooden clappers was banged together, and the session began.

In the silence the *jikijitsu* could occasionally be heard bawling out one of the monks for some irregularity. From his place he kept his eye on each of us, and in the "telepathic" atmosphere of the *Zendo* he intuitively divined any sign of mental restlessness or confusion. And like an animal in the forest which vaguely senses the untoward, he would sometimes creep along our ranks and scrutinise us, carrying his stick aloft like a ceremonial sword; he always bowed over this stick before he put it away at the end of the evening, holding it, as he did so, horizontally in front of him.

Becoming stiff, I was glad when the half-hour was up, and we could put on our sandals again and walk round the *Zendo* at a brisk pace to loosen our joints; we did so in Indian file. During this exercise-period a monk could leave the *Zendo*, and on returning he would bow deeply to a fellow-monk in the file, who immediately dropped back to make a place for him. There followed another half-hour's meditation, and then a bell would toll from the *Roshi*'s apartments summoning us to the critical interview known as *San-zen*. It was some weeks, however, before I was permitted to see the Master, since I was still learning the rudiments of concentration and posture-control.

After *San-zen* meditation was resumed. Presently, the serving-monks rushed through

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the *Zendo* bearing bowls of *udon*, a kind of noodle-soup, which had to be eaten fast: a difficult task for one like myself unaccustomed to chop-sticks. Buddhist monks normally take no food after midday, but in the colder climate of Japan an exception is made for what is called the "medicine-meal." As the evening wore on, some monks would become drowsy, and the *jikijitsu* or his assistant, the *tanto*, a wiry, zealous little fellow, would whack them across the shoulder-blades with the sharp side of the *keisaku*.

The *keisaku*, a long staff, was curiously shaped, being flat and wide and smooth on one side, and sharply narrow on the other. The smooth side was used occasionally on the cold winter nights; a monk by touching the *tatami* with his forehead could request the *jikijitsu* to thump his back with it, which agreeably restored the circulation. Monks, however, dreaded the punitive beatings because of "losing face" before their fellow-monks, but they acknowledge the correction of their error by bowing to the *jikijitsu*; and the *jikijitsu*, at the end of the special meditation-week, would make a speech to us, apologising for having used his stick, but adding that he did so for our sakes. "In Japan," a cynical friend once remarked to me, "it doesn't matter if you chop off a man's head; it does matter, however, if you don't first ask his pardon for doing so."

The use of the *keisaku*, however, is not mainly punitive, still less, as I at first supposed, has it anything to do with flagellation or Christian ideas of self-mortification; it is a method of helping to bring about the sudden illumination of *satori*, usually in circumstances where words would be too slow and circumlocutory. It was first used in Chinese Zen monasteries by the Chinese Master Tê-Shan (780–865) who created an *impasse* in the mind of the disciple by suddenly springing a question on him and then exclaiming: "Answer, and you get thirty blows; don't answer, and you get thirty blows all the same!" The pace thus forced, the disciple had to extricate himself from the *impasse* before he had time for the severing thought, and in doing so, enlightenment sometimes resulted.*

PHYSICAL force is also used to overcome interior resistances, and on my first evening in the *Zendo* a monk, instead of filing out with the others for his interview with the *Roshi*, did not budge from the *tan*. The little *tanto* sprang on him, rolled him on his front, and pinioned the monk's back beneath his knees, while the *jikijitsu*, grasping the *keisaku* lying against the Manjusri shrine, belaboured him for about a minute; the unfortunate man then got up in a daze and staggered out towards the *Roshi*'s room. Another time, while we were waiting

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* The English writer, R. H. Blyth, who has spent many years in Zen monasteries both in Japan and Korea, gave me the following instance of the use of the *keisaku*. He was staying in a certain monastery where the *Roshi* was in the habit of lecturing at seven o'clock on Sunday mornings, and a particular monk was given the task of sweeping out the lecture-hall. One morning at seven o'clock the *Roshi* entered the hall, and finding it unswept sent for the monk, and without a word gave him a thrashing. "But today's not Sunday," protested the monk, "it's Saturday." "Oh, is it?" said the *Roshi*, and returned to his room. There was no interval for explanations or apologies; life does not explain or apologise; it flows on and on like a river; one must jump into it. In relating the story, however, he added that in his view the *keisaku* was sometimes applied without discrimination; it might serve some purpose when a monk was close to *satori*, but through overeagerness it was often used prematurely.

Lack of space prevents me from recording the fascinating conversation which I had with Mr. Blyth in Tokyo on his Zen experiences, but I must mention that he is the author of a magnificent four-volume work on the *haiku*—the famous Japanese seventeen-syllable verse whose pithiness makes it a characteristically Zen mode of expression. The *haiku* is, writes Blyth, "a kind of *satori* . . . in which we apprehend a thing by a realisation of our own original and essential unity with it," and as an example he translates a *haiku* written by the poet Onitsura:

The Great Morning:
Winds of long ago
Blow through the pine-trees.

Blyth comments upon it as follows: "'The Great Morning' is the morning of New Year's Day, and though an uncommon expression, it is peculiarly appropriate here. Ruskin says something reminding us strongly of Onitsura's verse: 'The orange stain on the edge of yonder Western peak reflects the sunsets of a thousand years.'"

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outside this room for *San-zen*, the *jikijitsu* and *tanto* suddenly seized hold of a monk—the reason was not clear to me—dragged him a few feet across the *tatami*, and threw him down on it; they repeated this action several times, flinging him backwards and forwards with shouts and curses. This, Mr. Ogata later explained, was probably to drive home to his unconscious—if he were near the experience of *satori* he may well have been temporarily in a confused demented state—that there was no rest for him, here, there or anywhere else; between devil and deep blue sea, between *jikijitsu* and *tanto*, his mind, metaphorically speaking, would take wings, leap across the void, and hit reality on the other side.

During the first incident I had remained on the *tan* gaping with a mixture of curiosity, bewilderment and nausea, but the *tanto*, espying me, dashed over to my place with sweat pouring down his flushed cheeks, and ordered me out. In the *Zendo* the observing attitude is discouraged since it increases the opportunity for discriminating and conceptual thought.

AT FIRST I was in various ways intimidated by the *tanto*; he was somewhat fanatical, but, like most Japanese, he had a soft melancholy streak which he sometimes tried to assuage by drinking saké. He always took an especial interest in my progress, and once outside the *Roshi's* room, he knelt beside me, and sensing, no doubt, that I had attained a certain meditative depth, later congratulated me with a low bow; instinctively, being European, I clasped him by the hand.

In course of time I also grew accustomed to the outbursts of excited violence, though when I first complained about them to Mr. Ogata he said: "Bah! How will you face up to death, when it comes, if you are put out by a few blows with a stick?"

After attending the *Zendo* for some weeks I graduated to the next, most critical, stage of my training wherein I was given a subject for meditation by the *Roshi*, and each day and sometimes oftener, he would examine me upon it. The subject of meditation is known as a *koan*, an invention of the Chinese Zen Masters, and of the hundreds of *koan* in Chinese and Japanese Zen these are a few:

All things are reducible to the One, but to what is the One reducible?

Think not of good, think not of evil. What was your original face before you were born?

Two hands clapped together make a sound. What is the sound of one hand clapping?

There is a live goose in a bottle. How does one remove the goose without hurting it or damaging the bottle?

A branch of a tree hangs over a steep precipice. A man is clinging to the branch with clenched teeth. Someone comes up to him and asks: "What is Zen?" What does he reply?

The *koan*, it must be emphasised, is not an intellectual conundrum like a Christmas parlour-game since it deliberately admits of no logical solution; it is intended simply to abort conceptual thinking, driving the mind deeper and deeper into that region of void or nescience wherein, in the unitive moment, it makes contact with the Absolute. Consequently, the novice may meditate for months, even years, on a single *koan*, but once he has brought himself to that state of inner awareness in which he has solved one, the answer to every other one will be patent to him. It is true that to each *koan* there is supposed to be an orthodox reply, but it would be profitless to learn it by heart since the *Roshi*, if he had any suspicions, would immediately spring another one, from which it would become apparent that he was being deceived. Nor is it necessary, in any case, to proffer the orthodox reply; a loud laugh, a non-committal remark—for instance, "What about a cup of tea?"—or the exclamation "Katsu!" (supposed occasionally to be heard in the *Zendo*) are means by which monks indicate their *koan* solution—in other words, *satori*.

In Zen circles the usefulness of the *koan* is still disputed, some maintaining that it is merely a trick to tire the conceptual imagination, others that its effectiveness is beyond

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cavil. According to one of the old Chinese Masters, by name Pan-jo*:

"When you concentrate on the KOAN *steadily, intensely and without interruption you will gradually become unaware of your bodily existence. But be careful at this stage not to give way to daydreaming; the* KOAN *should continuously occupy the centre of your consciousness. The time then comes when everything, including the* KOAN, *vanishes from your mind, even the mind itself. And at that very instant, like a bean popping out of dead ashes, you realise that when Mr. Chang is drinking, Mr. Li becomes tipsy. . . ."*

Another Chinese Zen Master, P'u-yen, says this:

"All things are reducible to the One, but to what is the One reducible? With all the courage and determination at your command, keep this KOAN *before you, and after a time you will find that it rises before you of its own accord, insisting on a solution. Oblivious of yourself and your surroundings, you then become wholly obsessed by 'the spirit of search.' In time this 'spirit of search' will also disappear as a perception in the mind, and there will follow a state of unconsciousness in which neither the* KOAN *exists nor he who seeks its solution. This is known as the state of objectlessness. But it is not the final one; an ancient Master warns us not to mistake the state of unconsciousness or objectlessness for the truth. While in this state, however, you happen to hear a sound or perceive an object, and then, all of a sudden, the whole thing bursts upon you: you have at last touched the ultimate reality. Nothing is left now but to break into a loud laugh, for you have crossed the final barrier; you know now that when the Kuai-chow cow grazes, the I-chou horse finds its stomach filled."*

I shall not try to relate the progress of my *koan* study since it would be a record of elusive and in any case now largely forgotten mental experiences. Moreover, owing to my ignorance of Japanese, which necessitated cumbrous interpretation, it was impossible for the *Roshi* to get properly inside my mind, or me inside his. As, however, I meditated on the *koan* in the *Zendo*, my mind became more quickly able to empty itself, and down, down, I would go, like a diver slipping beneath the sea, its troubled surface—the conflicts, the problems, the preoccupations of ordinary life—appearing at this depth like some remote manufactured verbal nonsense; and at the sound of the wooden clappers, which announced the end of the session, I would rouse myself with difficulty from my trance.

Holding the *koan* firmly in my mind, I would then proceed to *San-zen*, and having recited the *koan* to the *Roshi*, as the rule prescribed (I even learnt one or two of them in Japanese), I would give my solution. Speaking generally, if this solution was given on an instantaneous impulse from the depths of my being, he would accept it; but if, as usually happened, I in some slight degree premeditated it, and an interval elapsed in which I severed myself from the thought—if, in other words, I had allowed myself to think the thought—he struck the bell, and out I would go. One had to learn to die—to oneself and the thought, to the world and everything in it—and out of the dying embers came—the unitive spark! A cry, a shout, a sudden interjection—and the spirit is released from its prison, and in the illuminating moment everything stands open to its gaze.

At the beginning of this essay I called Zen a form of mysticism, and I am willing to stand by the word if it does not hint, as perhaps it does, at some kind of transcendental obscurity. For Zen is practical; not merely a monastic discipline, but a way of life, characterised by its simplicity and its naturalness. It is the art of seizing and identifying ourselves with the living moment, of becoming at one with the Tao: the Mood

* Slightly abbreviated by myself from quotations in Dr. Suzuki's *The Training of the Zen Buddhist Monk*.

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of the Universe. In the words of a Japanese poet:

> *We eat, excrete, sleep and get up;*
> *This is our world.*
> *All we have to do after that—*
> *Is to die.*

And that, assuredly, is Zen.

How Zen came to exercise such an immense influence on the arts and culture of Japan is another subject, but a clue is provided in Dr. Arthur Waley's *The Way and its Power*. "The Taoists," writes Waley, "saw in many arts and crafts the utilisation of a power akin if not identical with that of Tao. The wheelwright, the carpenter, the butcher, the bowman, the swimmer, achieve their skill not by accumulating facts concerning their art, nor by the energetic use either of muscles or outward senses; but through utilising the fundamental kinship which, under apparent distinctions and diversities, unites their own Primal Stuff to the Primal Stuff of the medium in which they work." When this discovery is made—when, breaking through the "unreal severance," he rises to the perception of the unitive nature of all life—the Japanese artist, whether swordsman or archer, Flower Master or Calligraphy Master, finds that a mysterious "force" is unleashed in his mind which he can use in the exercise of his art. The process has been brilliantly described in many books, notably by Eugen Herrigel, a German Professor who studied archery for six years under a Zen Master; and by Doctor Suzuki.*

I LEFT Shokokuji at the end of July 1956, and I count the months I spent there as the most fascinating of my life. The monks were about to return to their villages for the summer holidays. Some of them, however, had arranged to travel on foot through the length and breadth of Japan to visit other Zen monasteries and meet other Masters, even as they did in the old days in China. My friend Asai, the cook-monk, and the fiery little *tanto* were setting off together. When I told Asai I was returning to London, he said: "Ah, Rumbold-San, you have not enough Zen in you yet. If you had, you wouldn't need to leave—you could remain in Japan and yet be in London too!"

In accordance with Japanese custom, I exchanged gifts, and among the gifts to me was a fan from the *Roshi* with some Zen verses written upon it in his beautiful calligraphy; it was also stamped with his red seal. When I bade him *sayonara* after we had drunk together the ceremonial tea, he told me that, no matter where I went in the world, I should never escape the spell of Zen. "It will pursue you," he said, "to the ends of the earth."

* See *Zen In the Art of Archery* and Suzuki's *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*.

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Arthur Koestler

The Sleepwalker

Johannes Kepler, and the Psychology of Discovery (II)

IN THE *Mysterium Cosmographicum*, Kepler had tried to build his universe around the five Pythagorean solids. Since the theory did not quite fit the facts, he now tried to build it round the musical harmonies of the Pythagorean scale. The combination of these two ideas led, twenty years later, to his great work *Harmonice Mundi*, which contains the third of Kepler's laws; but the ground work to it was laid in his youth, during his years in Gratz.

In the Pythagorean universe, the sun, moon, and planets revolve around the earth in concentric circles, each fastened to a sphere or wheel. The swift revolution of each of these bodies causes a swish, or musical hum. Evidently each planet will hum on a different pitch, depending on the ratios of their respective orbits—just as the tone of a string depends on its length. Thus the orbits in which the planets move form a kind of huge lyre whose strings are curved into circles. Or, rather, the Pythagorean world resembles a cosmic musical box playing the same Bach prelude from eternity to eternity.

The moment this new idea had occurred to him, Kepler's letters resounded with jubilant *Eurekas*: "Fill the skies with air, and they will produce true and real music." But as he began to compute the details of the cosmic instrument, he ran into increasing difficulties. He was never short of an excuse for ascribing to any pair of planets the musical interval which approximately happened to fit it; when things became sticky, he asked the shadow of Pythagoras for help—"unless the soul of Pythagoras has migrated into mine." He managed to construct a system of sorts, but its inadequacies were obvious to himself.

The principal trouble was that a planet does not move at uniform speed, but faster when it is close to the sun, slower when away from it. Accordingly it does not "hum" on a steady pitch, but alternates between a lower and a higher note. The interval between the two notes depends on the lopsidedness or "eccentricity" of the planet's orbit. But the eccentricities were only inaccurately known. How could you build a musical instrument, without knowing the measurements? There was only one man alive in the world who possessed the exact data which Kepler needed: Tycho de Brahe.

All his hopes became now focused on Tycho, and his observatory at Uraniburg, the new wonder of the world:

> Let all keep silence and hark to Tycho who has devoted thirty-five years to his observations.... For Tycho alone do I wait; he shall explain to me the order and arrangement of the orbits.... Then I hope I shall one day, if God keeps me alive, erect a wonderful edifice.

But Tycho refused to publish his observations until he had completed his own theory. He jealously guarded his treasure, volumes of figures, the result of a lifetime of work.

> Any single instrument of his [young Kepler wrote bitterly] costs more than my and my whole family's fortune put together.... My opinion of Tycho is this: he is superlatively rich, but he knows not how to make proper use of it as is the case with most rich people. Therefore, one must try to wrest his riches from him.

In this outcry, Kepler had revealed his intentions towards Tycho de Brahe a year before they met for the first time.

The Great Dane

JOHANNES KEPLER was a pauper who came from a family of misfits; Tycho de Brahe was a *grand seigneur* from the Hamlet country, the scion of truculent and quixotic noblemen of pure Danish stock. His father had been Governor of Helsingborg Castle, which

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faces Elsinore across the Sund; his Uncle Joergen, a country squire and vice-admiral.

This Uncle Joergen, being childless, had extracted a promise from his brother, the Governor, that if he had a son, Joergen could adopt him and bring him up as his own. Nature seemed to sanction this arrangement, for, in 1546, the Governor's wife bore him twin sons; but unfortunately one of them was still-born, and the father went back on his promise. Joergen, a true, headstrong Brahe, waited until another son was born to his brother, then kidnapped the first-born, Tyge—Tycho. The Governor, also in true Brahe fashion, threatened murder, but quickly cooled off and generously consented to the *fait accompli*, knowing that the child would be well looked after and inherit some of Joergen's fortune. This came indeed to pass and sooner than expected, for while Tyge was still a student, his foster-father met an untimely and glorious end. He had just returned from a naval battle against the Swedes, and was riding in the suite of his King over the bridge joining Copenhagen to the royal castle, when the good King, Ferdinand II, fell into the water. Joergen, the vice-admiral, jumped after him, saved his King and died of pneumonia.

Whether Tyge suffered a traumatic shock by being kidnapped from his cradle we cannot know; but the blood of the Brahes and his education by the irascible vice-admiral must have sufficed to turn him into an eccentric in the grand style. This was visible at first glance, even in his physical appearance: for if Tycho was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, he later acquired a nose of silver and gold. As a student, he fought a duel with another noble Danish youth in the course of which part of Tyge's nose was sliced off. According to a contemporary account, the quarrel originated in a dispute as to which of the two noble Danes was the better mathematician. The lost piece, which seems to have been the bridge of the nose, was replaced by a gold and silver alloy, and Tycho is said to have always carried a kind of snuff-box "containing some ointment or glutinous composition which he frequently rubbed on his nose." On his portraits, the nose appears as a too angular, cubistic feature among the curves of a large, bald, egg-shaped head, set between the cold, haughty eyes and the aggressively twirled handlebar moustache.

True to the family tradition, young Tyge was intended to take up the career of a statesman, and was accordingly sent at thirteen to study rhetorics and philosophy at the University of Copenhagen. But at the end of his first year, he witnessed an event which made an overwhelming impression on him and decided the whole future course of his life. It was a partial eclipse of the sun which, of course, had been announced beforehand, and it struck the boy as "something divine that men could know the motions of the stars so accurately that they were able a long time beforehand to predict their places and relative positions." He immediately began to buy books on astronomy, including the collected works of Ptolemy for the considerable sum of two Joachims-Thaler. From now onward his course was set and he never swerved from it.

Why did that partial eclipse, which was not at all spectacular as a sight, have such a decisive impact on the boy? The great revelation for him, Gassendi tells us, was the *predictability* of astronomical events—in total contrast, one might speculate, to the unpredictability of a child's life among the temperamental Brahes. It is not much of a psychological explanation, but it is worth noting that Brahe's interest in the stars took from the beginning a quite different, in fact almost opposite direction from both Copernicus' and Kepler's. It was not a speculative interest, but a passion for exact observation. Starting on Ptolemy at fourteen, and making his first observation at seventeen, Tycho took to astronomy at a much earlier age than those two. The timid Canon had found a refuge from a life of frustrations in the secret elaboration of his system; Kepler resolved the unbearable miseries of his youth in his mystic harmony of the spheres. Tycho was neither frustrated nor unhappy, only bored and irritated by the futility of a Danish nobleman's existence among, in his own words, "horses, dogs, and luxury"; and he was filled with naïve wonder at the contrasting soundness and reliability of the stargazers' predictions. He took to astronomy not as an escape or metaphysical lifebelt, but rather as a full-time hobby of an aristocrat in revolt against his *milieu*. His later life seems to confirm this interpretation, for he entertained kings on his wonder island, but the mistress of the house, with whom he begot a large family of children, was a woman of low caste to whom he was not even married in church.

During his studies at various German universities, until his twenty-sixth year, Tycho was all the time collecting, and later designing, bigger and better instruments for observing the planets. Among these was a huge quadrant of brass and oak, thirty-eight feet in diameter—the first of a series of fabulous instruments which were to become the wonder of the world. Tycho never made any epoch-making discovery except one, which made him the father of modern observational astronomy; but that one discovery has become such a truism to the modern mind that it is difficult to see its importance. The discovery was that astronomy needed *precise* and *continuous* observational data.

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It will be remembered that Canon Copernicus recorded only twenty-seven observations of his own in the whole *Book of Revolutions*; for the rest he relied on the data of Hipparchus, Ptolemy, and others. This had been the general practice up to Tycho. It was taken for granted that planetary tables must be exact, as far as possible, for calendrical and navigational purposes; but apart from the limited data required for these practical reasons, the necessity for precision was not at all realised. This attitude, which is all but incomprehensible to the modern mind, was partly due to the Aristotelian tradition with its emphasis on qualities instead of quantitative measurement; within that mental framework only a crank could be interested in precision for precision's sake. If one projects one's mind back to the other side of the watershed, Tycho's devotion to measurements, to fractions of minutes of arc, appears as highly original.

One of the reasons for Tycho's quest for precision was, in fact, his desire to check the validity of the Copernican system. But this was perhaps rather the rationalisation of a deeper urge. Meticulous patience, precision for precision's sake was for him a form of worship. His first great experience had been the awe-stricken realisation that astronomic events could be exactly predicted; his second was of the opposite kind. On August 17th, 1563, at the age of seventeen, he noticed that Saturn and Jupiter were so close together as to be almost indistinguishable. He looked up his planetary tables and discovered that the Alphonsine tables were a whole month in error regarding this event, and the Copernican tables by several days. This was an intolerable and shocking state of affairs. If the stargazers, of whose low company his family so disapproved, could not do better, let a Danish nobleman show them how a proper job is done.

And show them he did, by methods and gadgets the like of which the world had never seen.

King Frederick II of Denmark, whose life had been saved by Tycho's foster-father, the late Vice-Admiral, was a patron of philosophy and the arts. In February 1576, he sent a messenger —a youth of noble birth with orders to travel day and night—bearing a royal order for Tycho to come and see the King at once. Tycho obeyed, and the King made him an offer that sounded like a fairy tale: an island in the Sund between Copenhagen and Elsinore Castle, three miles in length, extending over two thousand acres of flat tableland, rising on sheer white cliffs out of the sea.

Thus came into existence the fabulous Uraniburg on the island of Hveen, where Tycho lived for twenty years and taught the world the methods of exact observation.

Life at Uraniburg was not exactly what one would expect to be the routine of a scholar's family, but rather that of a Renaissance court. There was a steady succession of banquets for distinguished visitors, presided over by the indefatigable, hard-drinking, gargantuan host, holding forth on the variations in the eccentricity of Mars, rubbing ointment on his silver nose, and throwing casual titbits to his fool Jepp, who sat at the master's feet under the table, chattering incessantly amidst the general noise. This Jepp was a dwarf, reputed to have second sight, of which he seemed to give spectacular proof on several occasions.

Tycho is really a refreshing exception among the sombre, tortured, neurotic geniuses of science. He was, it is true, not a creative genius, only a giant of methodical observation. Still, he displayed all the vanity of genius in his interminable poetic outpourings. His poetry is even more dreadful than Copernicus', and more abundant in quantity—Tycho was never in want of a publisher, since he had his own paper mill and printing press.

He stuck it out on his Scarlet Island for twenty years; then, at fifty-one, he took up his wanderings again. In June 1599 he arrived in Prague, and was appointed Imperial Mathematicus by Rudolph II. He was again given a castle, and a salary of three thousand florins a year—Kepler in Gratz had two hundred.

Had Tycho remained in Denmark, it is unlikely that Kepler could have afforded the expense to visit him during the short remaining span of Tycho's life. If it was divine providence which timed their meeting, it chose a rather perverse method: Kepler was hounded out of Gratz, and into the arms of Tycho, by religious persecution. Though he always endeavoured to read the thoughts of God, he never offered his thanks for this Machiavellian stratagem.

At last, then, on February 4th, 1600, Tycho de Brahe and Johannes Keplerus, co-founders of a new universe, met face to face, silver nose to scabby cheek. Tycho was fifty-three, Kepler twenty-nine. Tycho was an aristocrat, Kepler a plebeian; Tycho a Croesus, Kepler a churchmouse; Tycho a Great Dane, Kepler a mangy mongrel. They were opposites in every respect but one: the choleric disposition which they shared. The result was constant friction, flaring into heated quarrels, followed by half-hearted reconciliations.

But all this was on the surface. In appearance, it was a meeting of two crafty scholars, each determined to make use of the other for his own purposes. But under the surface, they both knew, with the certainty of sleepwalkers, that they were born to complete each other. Their relationship was to alternate between these two

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levels: *qua* sleepwalkers, they strolled arm in arm through uncharted spaces; in their waking contacts they brought out the worst in the other's character, as if by mutual induction.

Altogether the association between Kepler and Tycho lasted for eighteen months, until Tycho's death. He died, fittingly, of an ailment of the bladder and prostate. During his last days, whenever the pain subsided, the great Dane refused to keep to a diet, ordered and ate ravenously whatever dish came to his mind. When delirium set in again, he kept repeating softly that he hoped his life had not been wasted (*ne frusta vixisse videar*). The meaning of these words becomes clear through his last wish addressed to Kepler. It was the same wish which he had expressed in his first letter to him: that Kepler should build the new universe not on the Copernican, but on Tycho's system. Yet he must have known, as his delirious complaint revealed, that Kepler would do just the opposite, and put the Tychonic legacy to his own use.

Tycho was buried with great pomp in Prague, his coffin carried by twelve imperial Gentlemen-at-Arms, preceded by his coat of arms, his golden spurs, and favourite horse.

Two days later, on November 6th, 1601, the Emperor's privy councillor, Barwitz, called on Kepler at his lodgings, to appoint him, as Tycho's successor, to the post of Imperial Mathematicus.

The Giving of the Laws

KEPLER stayed in Prague as Imperial Mathematicus from 1601 to 1612, to the death of Rudolph II. It was the most fruitful period of his life, and brought him the unique distinction of founding two new sciences: instrumental optics, which does not concern us, and physical astronomy.

On Kepler's arrival at Tycho's castle, he had been assigned the task of investigating the orbit of the notoriously most difficult planet, Mars. This decision proved of momentous importance. Kepler, proud to be entrusted with Mars, boasted that he would solve the problem of its orbit in eight days, and even made a bet with this deadline. The eight days grew into nearly eight years. But out of the struggle of these years with the recalcitrant planet emerged Kepler's *magnum opus*, which bore the significant title:

A NEW ASTRONOMY Based on Causation
or A PHYSICS OF THE SKY
derived from Investigations of the Motions of the Star Mars
Founded on Observations of the Noble Tycho Brahe

Kepler worked on it, with interruptions, from his arrival at Benatek in 1600, to 1606. It contains the first two of Kepler's three planetary laws: (1) that the planets travel round the sun not in circles but in elliptical orbits, one focus of the ellipse being occupied by the sun; (2) that a planet moves in its orbit not at uniform speed but in such a manner that a line drawn from the planet to the sun always sweeps over equal areas in equal times. The third law was published later.

On the surface, Kepler's laws look as innocent as Einstein's $E=Mc^2$, which does not reveal, either, its atom-exploding potentialities. But the modern vision of the universe was shaped, more than by any other single discovery, by Newton's law of universal gravitation, which in turn was derived from Kepler's three laws. Although (owing to the peculiarities of our educational system), a person may never have heard of Kepler's laws, his thinking has been moulded by them without his knowledge; they are the invisible foundation of a whole edifice of thought.

Thus the promulgation of Kepler's laws is a landmark in history. They were the first "natural laws" in the modern sense: precise, verifiable statements about universal relations governing particular phenomena, expressed in mathematical terms. They divorced astronomy from theology, and married astronomy to physics. Lastly, they put an end to the nightmare that had haunted cosmology for the last two millennia: the dogma that all heavenly bodies must move in perfect circles at uniform speed.

The dogma originated with Plato and Aristotle, and was in obvious contradiction with the observed fact that the planets moved neither in perfect circles, nor at uniform speed. However, any rhythmic movement, even the dance of a bird, can be imagined as being caused by a clockwork in which a great number of invisible wheels co-operate to produce the motions. Ever since "uniform circular motion" had become the law governing the heavens, the task of astronomers was reduced to designing, on paper, just such imaginary clockworks which explained the dance of the planets as a result of the gyrations of fictitious wheels-on-wheels. This task kept them busy for the next two thousand years. With his circular dogma, Aristotle had laid a curse on astronomy, whose effects were to last till, at the beginning of the 17th century, Kepler proved that planets move in oval, and not circular orbits. There is perhaps no other example in the history of thought of such dogged, obsessional persistence in error, as the circular fallacy which bedevilled cosmology for two millennia.

Every astronomer knew, of course, that this monstrously complicated clockwork of "epicycles" and "eccenters" existed only on his drawing-board, that it was a physical impossibility and had no bearing whatsoever on the real

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structure of the universe. Mediæval astronomy was an "exact" science, capable of accurate predictions, but completely divorced from reality; it was a science based on the rules of double-think. Kepler's proof that the planets moved in elliptic orbits at periodically varying speeds which were mathematically dependent on their distance from the sun, enabled man to dispose of the whole creaking machinery of invisible wheels turning on wheels, and to substitute for it a vision of the solar system as composed of material bodies, not unlike the earth, freely floating in space, moved by physical forces acting on them.

The *New Astronomy* is written in bubbling baroque style, personal, intimate, and often exasperating. But it is a unique revelation of the ways in which the creative mind works. Kepler was incapable of exposing his ideas methodically, text-book fashion; he had to describe them in the order they came to him, including all the errors, detours, and the traps into which he had fallen. The book reads in parts like a cosmic odyssey, in parts like a comedy of errors. Thus in one of the decisive chapters (the sixteenth) Kepler absent-mindedly put three erroneous figures for three vital positions of Mars, and happily went on from there, never noticing his error. The French historian of astronomy, Delambre, later repeated the whole computation, but, surprisingly, his correct results differ very little from Kepler's faulty ones. The reason is, that towards the end of the chapter Kepler committed several mistakes in simple arithmetic—errors in division which would bring bad marks to any schoolboy—and these errors happen very nearly to cancel out his earlier mistakes. We shall see, in a moment, that, at the most crucial point of the process of discovering his Second Law, Kepler again committed mathematical sins which mutually cancelled out, and "as if by miracle" (in his own words) led to the correct result.

The Eight Fatal Minutes

AFTER years of labour—Kepler's draft calculations, preserved in manuscript, cover 900 folio pages in small handwriting—he seemed to have triumphantly achieved his aim. But when he compared the orbit of Mars which he had computed, with certain earlier observations by Tycho, there appeared a discrepancy between theory and fact of eight minutes arc (about one quarter of the apparent diameter of the moon).

This was a catastrophe. Ptolemy, and even Copernicus could afford to ignore a difference of eight minutes, because their observations were only accurate within a margin of ten minutes, anyway.

> But [the nineteenth chapter concludes], but for us, who, by divine kindness were given an accurate observer such as Tycho Brahe, for us it is fitting that we acknowledge this divine gift and put it to use. . . . And thus the edifice which we erected on the foundation of Tycho's observations, we have now again destroyed. . . . For, if I had believed that we could ignore these eight minutes, I would have patched up my hypothesis accordingly. But since it was not permissible to ignore them, those eight minutes point the road to a complete reformation of astronomy: they have become the building material for a large part of this work. . . .

It was the final capitulation of an adventurous mind before the "irreducible, obstinate facts." Earlier on, if a minor detail did not fit into a major hypothesis, it was cheated away or shrugged away. Now this time-hallowed indulgence had ceased to be permissible. A new era had begun in the history of thought: an era of austerity and rigour. As Whitehead has put it:

> All the world over and at all times there have been practical men, absorbed in "irreducible and stubborn facts": all the world over and at all times there have been men of philosophic temperament who have been absorbed in the weaving of general principles. It is this union of passionate interest in the detailed facts with equal devotion to abstract generalisation which forms the novelty in our present society.

This new departure determined the climate of European thought in the last three centuries; it set modern Europe apart from all other civilisations in the past and present, and enabled it to transform its natural environment as completely as if a new race had arisen on this planet.

The turning point is dramatically expressed in Kepler's work. In the *Mysterium Cosmographicum* the facts are coerced to fit the theory. In the *Astronomia Nova*, a theory, built on years of labour and torment, was instantly thrown away because of a discord of eight miserable minutes arc. Instead of cursing those eight minutes as a stumbling block, he transformed them into the cornerstone of a new science.

What caused this change of heart in him? I have already mentioned some of the general causes which contributed to the emergence of the new attitude: the need of navigators, and engineers, for greater precision in tools and theories; the stimulating effects on science of expanding commerce and industry. But what turned Kepler into the first law-maker of nature was something different and more specific. It was *his introduction of physical causality into the formal geometry of the skies* which made it impossible for him to ignore the eight minutes arc. So long as cosmology was guided by purely geometrical rules of the game regardless of

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physical causes, discrepancies betwen theory or fact could be overcome by inserting another fictitious wheel into the system. In a universe moved by real, physical forces, this was no longer possible. The revolution which freed thought from the stranglehold of ancient dogma, immediately created its own, rigorous discipline.

The last stage took another two years. Kepler now came to the final realisation that "the planet's orbit is not a circle but an oval figure." But he got himself into a new labyrinth of errors; he spent a year working on an "egg-shaped," then on a "chubby-faced" orbit; and when at last he hit on the ellipse, by what appeared to be a miraculous chance, he at first rejected the solution, until

> "the truth of Nature, which I had rejected and chased away, returned by stealth through the back door. . . . Oh, what a foolish bird I have been!"

It was a tremendous accomplishment. The great Ferris wheel of human delusion, with its celestial catwalks for the wandering planets, this phantasmagoria which had blocked man's approach to nature for two thousand years, was destroyed, "banished to the lumber-room." Some of the greatest discoveries, as we saw, consist mainly in the clearing away of psychological road-blocks which obstruct the approach to reality; which is why, *post factum*, they appear so obvious. In a letter to Longomontanus, Kepler qualified his own achievements as the "cleansing of the Augean stables."

Perhaps the most astonishing thing about the tortuous progress of his discoveries is the mixture of cleanness and uncleanness in his method. On the one hand, he throws away a cherished theory, the result of years of labour, because of those wretched eight minutes of arc. On the other hand he makes impermissible generalisations, knows that they are impermissible, yet does not care, hoping that somehow in the end everything will turn out all right: "It is not surprising that, when one dissects the universe with a lancet, various matters emerge only in a rough manner."

Both methods have, of course, their uses. The problem is to know when to follow one, when the other. Copernicus had a one-track mind; he never flew off at a tangent; even his cheatings were heavy-handed. Tycho was a giant as an observer, but nothing else. The measure of Kepler's genius is the intensity of his contradictions, and the use he made of them. We saw him plod, with infinite patience, along dreary stretches of trial-and-error procedure, then suddenly become airborne when a lucky guess or hazard presented him with an opportunity. What enabled him to recognise instantly his chance when the number *0.00429* turned up in an unexpected context was the fact that not only his waking mind, but his sleepwalking unconscious self was saturated with every conceivable aspect of his problem, not only with the numerical data and ratios, but also with an intuitive "feel" of the physical forces, and of the Gestalt-configurations which it involved. A locksmith who opens a complicated lock with a crude piece of bent wire is not guided by logic, but by the unconscious residue of countless past experiences with locks, which lend his touch a wisdom that his reason does not possess. It is perhaps this intermittent flicker of an overall vision which accounts for the mutually compensatory nature of Kepler's mistakes, as if some balancing reflex or "backfeed" mechanism had been at work in his unconscious mind.

Mind and Matter

In a letter which he wrote when the book was nearing completion, Kepler defined his programme:

> My aim is to show that the heavenly machine is not a kind of divine, live being, but a kind of clockwork (and he who believes that a clock has a soul, attributes the maker's glory to the work), in so far as nearly all the manifold motions are caused by a most simple, magnetic, and material force, just as all motions of the clock are caused by a simple weight. And I also show how these physical causes are to be given numerical and geometrical expression.

He had defined the essence of the scientific revolution. But he himself never completed the transition from a universe animated by purposeful intelligence to one moved by inanimate, "blind" forces. The very concept of a physical "force" devoid of purpose, which we take so much for granted, was only just emerging from the womb of animism, and the word for it—*virtus* or *vis*—betrays its origin. It was (and is) indeed much easier to talk about a "simple, magnetic, material force" than to form a concrete idea of its working. The following passage will illustrate the enormous difficulty which the notion of the "moving" force emanating from the sun presents to Kepler's mind:

> Though the light of the sun cannot itself be the moving force . . . it may perhaps represent a kind of vehicle, or tool, which the moving force uses. But the following considerations seem to contradict this. Firstly, the light is arrested in regions that lie in shade. If then, the moving force were to use light as a vehicle, then darkness would bring the planets to a standstill. . . . We must, therefore, conclude that, just as the light which lights up everything on earth is a non-substantial variety of the fire in the solar body, likewise this force which grips and carries the

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planet-bodies is a non-substantial variety of the force which has its seat in the sun itself; and that it has immeasurable strength, and thus gives the first impulse to all motion in the world. . . .

Who, I ask, will pretend that light has substance? Yet nevertheless it acts and is acted upon in space, it is refracted and reflected, and it has quantity, so that it may be dense or sparse, and can be regarded as a plane where it is received by something capable of being lit up. For, as I said in my *Optics*, the same thing applies to light as to our moving force: it has no present existence in the space between the source and the object which it lights up, although it has passed through that space in the past; it "is" not, it "was," so to speak.

The contemporary physicist grappling with the paradoxa of quantum mechanics will find here an echo of his perplexities. In the end, Kepler managed to get to terms with his "moving force" by visualising it as a vortex, "a raging current which tears all the planets, and perhaps all the celestial ether, from West to East." But he was nevertheless compelled to ascribe to each planet a kind of mind which enables it to recognise its position in space, and to adjust its reactions accordingly. To careless readers of the *Astronomia Nova* this looked as if the animal spirits had gained re-admission into the model which he intended to be a purely mechanical clockwork—like ghosts who cannot resign themselves to their final banishment from the world of the living. But Kepler's planetary minds bear in fact no resemblance to those mediæval planet-moving angels and spirits. They have no "souls" only "minds"; no sense organs, and no will of their own; they are rather like the computing machines in guided missiles:

> O Kepler, does't thou wish then to equip each planet with two eyes? Not at all. For it is not necessary, either, to attribute them feet or wings to enable them to move. . . . Our speculations have not yet exhausted all Nature's treasures, to enable us to know, how many senses exist. . . .
>
> The subtle reflections of some people concerning the blessed angels' and spirits' nature, motions, places, and activities, do not concern us here. We are discussing natural matters of much lower rank: forces which do not exercise free will when they change their activities, intelligences which are by no means separate from, but attached to, the stellar bodies to be moved, and are one with them.

Thus the function of the planet's mind is confined to responding in a lawful, orderly, and therefore "intelligent" manner to the various forces tugging at him. It is really a superior kind of electronic brain with an Aristotelian bias. Kepler's ambiguity is, in the last analysis, merely a reflection of the mind-matter dilemma, which becomes particularly acute in periods of transition—including our own.

Though Kepler was unable to solve the dilemma, he clarified it and polished its horns, as it were. The angels, spirits, and unmoved movers, were banished from cosmology; he sublimated and distilled the problem to a point where only the ultimate mystery remains. Though he was always attracted, with a mixture of disgust and fascination, by theological disputes, he uncompromisingly and indeed vehemently rejected the incursion of the theologians into science. On this point he made his position very clear in a statement—or rather a battle-cry—in the introduction to the *New Astronomy*:

> So much for the authority of Holy Scripture. Now as regards the opinions of the saints about these matters of nature, I answer in one word, that in theology the weight of Authority, but in philosophy the weight of Reason alone is valid. Therefore a saint was Lanctantius, who denied the earth's rotundity; a saint was Augustine, who admitted the rotundity, but denied that antipodes exist. Sacred is the Holy Office of our day, which admits the smallness of the earth but denies its motion: but to me more sacred than all these is Truth, when I, with all respect for the doctors of the Church, demonstrate from philosophy that the earth is round, circumhabited by antipodes, of a most insignificant smallness, and a swift wanderer among the stars.

The Witch Trial

THE year 1611 brought civil war and epidemics to Prague; the abdication of his imperial patron and provider; the death of his wife and favourite child. It was the first in a series of disasters which weighed down on the last twenty years of Kepler's life. After the death of Rudolph, in February 1612, he took up a new job as Provincial Mathematicus in Linz, capital of Upper Austria. It was a depressing come-down after the glories of Prague.

"Linz," to Austrians, remains to this day a byword for provincialism. Barbara, whose homesickness for Austria had been one of the reasons for Kepler's choice of Linz, was dead. His desolate loneliness wrung from him one of his self-analytical outcries:

> . . . My exaggerated trustingness, display of piety, a clutching at fame by means of startling projects and unusual actions, the restless search for and interpretation of causes, the spiritual anguish for grace. . . .

He had nobody to talk to, nobody even to quarrel with.

This last need, however, was fulfilled after a while by the local parson, one Daniel Hitzler, who refused him Communion because Kepler could not subscribe to the Lutheran doctrine of "the ubiquity" (which, later on, was dropped by the theologians). He kept protesting and

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complaining that gossips called him an atheist and a double-dealer, who was trying to curry favour with the Catholics and flirting with the Calvinists. Yet this repeated falling between three stools seemed to agree with his innermost nature:

> It hurts my heart that the three factions have miserably torn the truth to pieces between them, that I must collect the bits wherever I can find them, and put them together again.... I labour to reconcile the parties with each other whenever it can be done with sincerity, so that I should be able to side with all of them.... Behold, I am attracted either by all three parties, or at least by two of them against the third, setting my hopes on agreement; but my opponents are only attracted by one party, imagining that there must be irreconcilable division and strife. My attitude, so help me God, is a Christian one; theirs, I know not what.

It was the language of Erasmus and Tiedemann Giese, of the Golden Age of tolerance—but entirely out of place and out of date in Germany on the eve of the Thirty Years' War.

Engulfed by that European disaster, Kepler had to endure an additional ordeal: a kind of ghastly private epicycle turning on the greater wheel. His old mother had been accused of witchcraft and was threatened with being burnt alive. The proceedings lasted for six years, from 1615 to 1621; compared with this, the quasi- or semi-excommunication of Kepler himself was only a minor nuisance.

THE witch-hunting mania, which had grown in furore throughout the 16th century, reached its peak in the first half of the 17th, both in the Catholic and Protestant parts of Germany. In Weil der Stadt, Kepler's idyllic birthplace, with a population of two hundred families, thirty-eight witches were burnt between 1615 and 1629. In the neighbouring Leonberg, where Kepler's mother now lived, a place equally small, six witches were burnt in the winter of 1615 alone. It was one of the hurricanes of madness which strikes the world from time to time, and seems to be part of man's condition.

Kepler's mother was now a hideous little old woman, whose meddlesomeness and evil tongue, together with her suspect background, predestined her as a victim. She was, we remember, an innkeeper's daughter, brought up by an aunt who was said to have perished at the stake; and her husband had been a mercenary who vanished after barely escaping the gallows. In that same year, 1615, when Leonberg was seized with witch-hysteria, Katherine had a quarrel with another old hag, her former best friend, the wife of the glazier Jacob Reinhold. This was to be her undoing. The glazier's wife accused Katherine of having given her a witches' potion which had produced a chronic illness (in fact, her ailment was caused by an abortion). It was now remembered that various burghers of Leonberg had been taken ill at various times after being offered a drink from a tin jug which Katherine always kept hospitably prepared for her visitors. The wife of Bastian Meyer had died of it, and the schoolmaster Beutelspacher was permanently paralysed. It was remembered that once upon a time Katherine had asked the sexton for the skull of her father, which she wanted to have cast in silver as a drinking goblet for her son—that court astrologer, himself an adept of the black art. She had cast an evil eye on the children of the tailor Daniel Schmidt, who had promptly died; she was known to have entered houses through locked doors, and to have ridden to death a calf, of which she offered a cutlet to her other son, Heinrich the vagrant.

The proceedings were long, ghastly, and squalid. At various stages, Kepler's younger brother, Christoph, drillmaster of the militia of Leonberg, and his brother-in-law, the vicar, dissociated themselves from the old woman, squabbled over the cost of defence, and would apparently have been quite glad to see their mother burnt and have done with, except for the reflection it would cast on their own bourgeois respectability.

Kepler had always been fated to fight without allies, and for unpopular causes. He started with a counter-attack, accusing his mother's persecutors of being inspired by the devil, and peremptorily advised the Town Council of Leonberg to watch their steps, to remember that he was his Roman Imperial Majesty's Court Mathematicus, and to send him copies of all documents relating to his mother's case.

The old woman stayed for nine months in Linz; then she got homesick and returned to live with Margaret and the vicar, stake or no stake. Kepler followed her, reading on the journey *The Dialogue on Ancient and Modern Music* by Galileo's father. He succeeded in obtaining permission to take his mother back with him to Linz, but the stubborn old woman refused. She did not like Austria; Kepler had to return without her.

There followed a strange lull of two years—the opening years of the Thirty Years' War—during which Kepler wrote more petitions and the court collected more evidence, which now filled several volumes. Finally, on the night of August 7th, 1620, Ma Kepler was arrested in her son-in-law's vicarage; to avoid scandal, she was carried out of the house hidden in an oak linen-chest, and thus transported to the prison in Leonberg. She was interrogated by the Provost, denied being a witch, and was committed to a second and last interrogation, before being put to the torture.

Margaret sent another S.O.S. to Linz, and

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Kepler set out once again for Wuerttemberg. The immediate result of his arrival was that the Supreme Court granted Ma Kepler six weeks to prepare her defence. She was lying in chains in a room at the Town Gate, with two full-time guards—whose salary had to be paid by the defence, in addition to the extravagant quantities of firewood which they burnt. Kepler, who had built a new astronomy on a trifle of eight minutes arc, did not neglect such details in his petitions; he pointed out that one guard would be a sufficient security precaution for his chained mother, aged seventy-three, and that the cost of the firewood should be more equitably shared. He was his irrepressible, indefatigable, passionate and precise self. The situation, from the point of view of the authorities, was summed up by a slip in the court scribe's record: "The accused appeared in court, accompanied, alas, by her son, Johannes Kepler, mathematician."

The proceedings lasted for another year. The accusation comprised forty-nine points, plus a number of supplementary charges—for instance, that the accused had failed to shed tears when admonished with texts from Holy Scripture (this "weeping test" was important evidence in witch-trials); to which Ma Kepler retorted angrily, she had shed so many tears in her life that she had none left.

The Act of Accusation, read in September, was answered a few weeks later by an Act of Contestation by Kepler and counsel; this was refuted by an Act of Acceptation by the prosecution in December; in May, next year, the defence submitted an Act of Exception and Defence; in August, the prosecution answered with an Act of Deduction and Confutation. The last word was the Act of Conclusion by the defence, a hundred and twenty-eight pages long, and written mostly in Kepler's own hand. After that the case was sent, by order of the Duke, to the Faculty of Law at Tuebingen —Kepler's university. The Faculty found that Katherine ought to be questioned under torture, but recommended that the procedure should be halted at the stage of *territio*, or questioning under threat of torture.

According to the procedure laid down in such cases, the old woman was led into the torture chamber, confronted with the executioner, the instruments were shown to her, and their action on the body described in detail; then she was given a last chance to confess her guilt. The terror of the place was such that a great number of victims broke down and confessed at this stage. The reactions of Ma Kepler were described in the Provost's report to the Duke as follows:

> Having, in the presence of three members of the Court and of the town scribe, tried friendly persuasion on the accused, and having met with contradiction and denial, I led her to the usual place of torture and showed her the executioner and his instruments, and reminded her earnestly of the necessity of telling the truth, and of the great dolour and pain awaiting her. Regardless, however, of all earnest admonitions and reminders, she refused to admit and confess to witchcraft as charged, indicating that one should do with her as one liked, and that even if one artery after another were to be torn from her body, she would have nothing to confess; whereafter she fell on her knees and said a *pater noster*, and demanded that God should make a sign if she were a witch or a monster or had ever anything to do with witchcraft. She was willing to die, she said, God would reveal the truth after her death, and the injustice and violence done to her; she would leave it all to God, who would not withdraw the Holy Ghost from her, but be her support. . . . Having persisted in her contradiction and denial regarding witchcraft, and having remained steadfast in this position, I led her back to her place of custody.

A week later, Ma Kepler was released, after fourteen months of imprisonment. She could not return to Leonberg, though, because the populace threatened to lynch her. Six months later, she died.

It was against this background that Kepler wrote the *Harmony of the World*, in which the third planetary law was given to his engaging contemporaries.

Chaos and Harmony

THE work was completed in 1618, three months after the death of his daughter Katherine, and three days after the defenestration of Prague. No irony was intended by the title. Irony he only permitted himself in a footnote (to the sixth chapter of the Fifth Book), where the sounds emitted by the various planets as they hum along their orbits are discussed: "The Earth sings Mi-Fa-Mi, so we can gather even from this that *Misery* and *Famine* reign on our habitat."

The *Harmony of the World* is a mathematician's Song of Songs "to the chief harmonist of creation"; it is Job's daydream of a perfect universe. It is the continuation of the *Cosmic Mystery*, and the climax of his lifelong obsession. What Kepler attempted here is, simply, to bare the ultimate secret of the universe in an all-embracing synthesis of geometry, music, astrology, astronomy, and epistemology. It was the first attempt of this kind since Plato, and it is the last to our day.

Kepler finished the book on May 27th, 1618, in one of the most fateful weeks of European history:

> In vain does the God of War growl, snarl, roar, and try to interrupt with bombards, trumpets, and his whole tarantantaran. Let us despise the

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barbaric neighings which echo through these noble lands, and awaken our understanding and longing for the harmonies.

Out of the murky abyss he soared to heights of orphic ecstasies:

> The thing which dawned on me twenty-five years ago before I had yet discovered the five regular bodies between the heavenly orbits . . . ; which sixteen years ago I proclaimed as the ultimate aim of all research; which caused me to devote the best years of my life to astronomical studies, to join Tycho Brahe and to choose Prague as my residence—that I have, with the aid of God, who set my enthusiasm on fire and stirred in me an irrepressible desire, who kept my life and intelligence alert, and also provided me with the remaining necessities through the generosity of two Emperors and the Estates of my land, Upper Austria—that I have now, after discharging my astronomical duties *ad satietatum*, at long last brought to light. . . . Having perceived the first glimmer of dawn eighteen months ago, the light of day three months ago, but only a few days ago the plain sun of a most wonderful vision —nothing shall now hold me back. Yes, I give myself up to holy raving. I mockingly defy all mortals with this open confession: I have robbed the golden vessels of the Egyptians to make out of them a tabernacle for my God, far from the frontiers of Egypt. If you forgive me, I shall rejoice. If you are angry, I shall bear it. Behold, I have cast the dice, and I am writing a book either for my contemporaries, or for posterity. It is all the same to me. It may wait a hundred years for a reader, since God has also waited six thousand years for a witness. . . .

This last quotation is from the Preface to the Fifth Book of the *Harmonice Mundi*, which contains, almost hidden among the luxuriant growth of fantasy, Kepler's Third Law of planetary motion.

It says, put into modern terms, that the squares of the periods of revolution of any two planets are as the cubes of their mean distances from the sun.

Unlike his First and Second Laws, which he found by that peculiar combination of sleepwalking intuition and wide-awake alertness for clues—a mental process on two levels, which drew mysterious benefits out of his apparent blunderings—the Third Law was the fruit of nothing but patient, dogged trying. When after endless trials, he had at last hit on the square-to-cube ratio, he of course promptly found a reason why it should be just that and none other; I have said before that Kepler's *a priori* proofs were often invented *a posteriori*.

He celebrated his new discovery, as he had celebrated his First Law, with a quotation from Virgil's *Eclogues*; in both cases Truth appears in the shape of a teasing hussy who surrenders unexpectedly to her pursuer when he has already given up hope. For in both cases the true solution was rejected by Kepler when it first occurred to him, and was only accepted when it crept in a second time, "through a back-door of the mind."

He had been searching for this Third Law, that is to say, for a correlation between a planet's *period* and its *distance*, since his youth. Without such a correlation, the universe would make no sense to him; it would be an arbitrary structure. If the sun had the power to govern the planets' motions, then that motion must *somehow* depend on their distance from the sun; but how? Kepler was the first who saw the problem—quite apart from the fact that he found the answer to it, after twenty-two years of labour. The reason why nobody before him had asked the question is that nobody had thought of cosmological problems in terms of actual physical forces. So long as cosmology remained divorced from physical causation in the mind, *the right question could not occur* in that mind. Again a parallel to the present situation imposes itself: there is, one suspects, a fragmentation in the 20th-century mind which prevents it from asking the right questions. The offspring of a new synthesis is not a ready solution, but a healthy problem crying lustily for an answer. And *vice versa*: a one-sided philosophy—whether it be scholasticism or 19th-century mechanism, creates sick problems, of the sort "What is the sex of the angels?" or "Is man a machine?"

The Ultimate Paradox

THE *objective* importance of the Third Law is that it provided the final clue for Newton; hidden away in it is the essence of the Law of Gravity. But its *subjective* importance to Kepler was that it furthered his chimerical quest—and nothing else. The Law makes its first appearance as "Proposition No. 8" in a chapter characteristically called "The Main Propositions of Astronomy which are needed for the Investigation of the Celestial Harmonies." In the same chapter (the only one in the book which deals with astronomy proper) the First Law is merely mentioned in passing, almost shamefacedly, and the Second Law not at all. Not the least achievement of Newton was to spot the Three Laws in Kepler's writings, hidden away as they were like forget-me-nots in a tropical flowerbed.

To change metaphors once more: the three Laws are the pillars on which the edifice of modern cosmology rests; but to Kepler they meant no more than bricks among other bricks for the construction of his baroque temple, designed by a moon-struck architect. He never realised their real importance. In his earliest book he had remarked that "Copernicus did not know how rich he was"; the same remark applies to Kepler himself.

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I have stressed this parodox over and again; now it is time to try to resolve it. Firstly, Kepler's obsession with a cosmos built around the Pythagorean solids and the musical harmonies; was not quite as extravagant as it seems to us. It was in keeping with the traditions of Neoplatonism, with the revival of Pythagoreanism, with the teaching of Paracelsians, Rosicrucians, astrologers, alchemists, cabbalists, and hermetists, who were still conspicuously in evidence in the early 17th century. When we talk of "the age of Kepler and Galileo," we are apt to forget that they were isolated individuals, a generation ahead of the most enlightened men of their time. If the "harmony of the world" was a fantastic dream, its symbols had been shared by a whole dreaming culture. If it was an *idée fixe*, it was derived from a collective obsession—only more elaborate and precise, enlarged on a grandiose scale, more artful and self-consistent, carried on to the ultimate perfection of mathematical detail. The Keplerian universe is the crowning achievement of a type of cosmic architecture which began with the Babylonians and ends with Kepler himself.

The paradox, then, is not in the mystic nature of Kepler's edifice but in the modern architectural elements which it employed, in its combination of incompatible building materials. Dream-architects are not worried about imprecisions of a fraction of a decimal; they do not spend twenty years with dreary, heart-breaking computations to build their fantasy towers. Only some forms of insanity show this pedantic method in madness. In reading certain chapters of the *Harmonice*, one is indeed reminded of the explosive yet painstakingly elaborate paintings by schizophrenics, which would pass as legitimate art if painted by a savage or a child, but are judged by clinical standards if one knows that they are the work of a middle-aged chartered accountant. The Keplerian schizophrenia becomes apparent only when he is judged by the standard of his achievements in optics, as a pioneer of the differential calculus, the discoverer of the three Laws. His split mind is revealed in the manner in which he saw himself in his non-obsessional moments: as a sober "modern" scientist, unaffected by any mystic leanings.

A second point is equally relevant to the Keplerian paradox. The main reason why he was unable to realise how rich he was—that is, to understand the significance of his own Laws—is a technical one: the inadequacy of the mathematical tools of his time. Without differential calculus and/or analytical geometry, the three Laws show no apparent connection with each other—they are disjointed bits of information which do not make much sense. Why should God will the planets to move in ellipses? Why should their speed be governed by the area swept over by the radius vector? Why should the ratio between distance and period be mixed up with cubes and squares? Once you know the inverse square law of gravity and Newton's equations, all this becomes beautifully self-evident. But without the roof which holds them together, Kepler's Laws seem to have no particular *raison d'être*. Of the first he was almost ashamed: it was a departure from the circle sacred to the ancients, sacred even to Galileo and, for different reasons, to himself. The ellipse had nothing to recommend it in the eyes of God and man; Kepler betrayed his bad conscience when he compared it to a cartload of dung which he had to bring into the system as a price for ridding it of a vaster amount of dung. The Second Law he regarded as a mere calculating device, and constantly repudiated it in favour of a faulty approximation; the Third as a necessary link in the system of harmonies, and nothing more. But then, without the notion of gravity and the method of the calculus, it *could* be nothing more.

Johannes Kepler set out to discover India and found America. It is an event repeated over and again in the quest for knowledge. But the result is indifferent to the motive. A fact, once discovered, leads an existence of its own, and enters into relations with other facts of which their discoverers have never dreamt. Appollonius of Perga discovered the laws of the useless curves which emerge when a plane intersects a cone at various angles: these curves proved, centuries later, to represent the paths followed by planets, comets, rockets, and satellites.

> One cannot escape the feeling [wrote Heinrich Herz] that these mathematical formulæ have an independent existence and an intelligence of their own, that they are wiser than we are, wiser even than their discoverers, that we get more out of them than was originally put into them.

This confession of the discoverer of radio-waves sounds like an echo of Kepler, echoing Plato, echoing Pythagoras: "Methinks that all of nature and the graceful sky are set into symbols *in geometriam*."

(*A concluding article follows in our next number*)

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BURNS SINGER and JERZY PETERKIEWICZ

Poems from the Polish

From earthy decay the soul flew away:
In a green meadow it went astray:
Weeping in sorrow, its thoughts were not gay.
Saint Peter came and said:
"Why are you here, weeping in sorrow?"
The soul replied:
"Since I don't know which way to go
I stand quite still, weeping in sorrow."
Saint Peter whispered:
"Soul, sweet soul,
Come to the Heavenly Kingdom. Rise.
I'll let you into Paradise."

Anon. (15th c.)

Epitaph for a Dog

Your master dead, your life all out of tune,
You, Garsonek, on Thursday, died at noon.
    You'd waited by his coffin for his call.
    Beside his grave you'd watched the damp night fall.
You scented his familiar footsteps and
Followed until, by Charon's cruel command,
    A small beast on no errand, you were tossed
    Overboard whimpering; and the ferry crossed.
You dared not enter Lethe since you had feared
Water during your life: and so you reared
    Back from the bank and barked and whined in vain,
    And ran about and waited, and barked again.
Now you will howl forever on that shore.
Your own death holds you and the water's roar.
    We, to reward the endless love you gave
    Your master, give your corpse an earthen grave.

Samuel TWARDOWSKI (1600-60)

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To St. John the Baptist

Of course you are the messenger, you who
  Shed the grey brightness which the sun breaks through.
As when pale dawn provokes the birds to play
  Their music glorifies the shape of day,
So your birth violates your father's tongue
  Till, from his lips, a shriek of praise is wrung.
And as the sun burns red when the last gleam
  Of styptic dawn admits a blood-red stream,
Your blood, too, gushes on the world whose fate
  The sun you herald will illuminate.

Andrzej MORZSTYN (1613?–1693)

Recollection of Past Love

(*a pastoral song*)

Within the vale the stream runs on.
Sycamores shield it with their boughs.
I think of evenings long since gone
When you, Justine, and I made vows.

Night passed too quickly: then pale day
Allowed one single last caress.
Our love had stolen sleep away.
Love feeds upon our sleeplessness.

Dawn whitened earth. We saw on each
Sycamore diamond signatures.
We sat unmoving, without speech,
And carved our names, my name and yours.

No one sneered, and no one knew;
Heaven alone watched over us.
There was no guilt between us two.
Heaven did not think me infamous.

Look answered look as hand clasped hand.
Two mouths, made one, drank from one bowl.
Our bodies learned to understand
And soul, when asked, replied to soul.

Then thunder came: a storm arose:
An ancient oak fell like a stone:
And, trembling as you held me close,
You said: "I will not die alone."

Here, to this stream, that apple tree,
I often come and try to think.
My thirst was never slaked till she
With her own hands gave me to drink.

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But nothing in this world will keep.
Fate parts us, angry Fate, and blind.
A country yokel tending sheep
Has blotted out the names we signed.

No, there is not a single trace.
The wood is overgrown and sere.
The stream, the sycamores, keep their place,
But you, Justine, you are not here.

Franciszek KARPINSKI (1741–1825)

The Prisoner's Return

Him! So I rushed. "But there will be a spy.
Don't go today." I made another try
The morning after. Police thugs at the door.
The next week, too, I went. "His health is poor."
And then, at last, when travelling out of town
They told me that a fat but broken-down
Fellow was my friend. His hair had gone; his skin
Was a puffed sponge that wrinkles burrowed in.
Bad food had done it, that and rotten air.
I never would have known him, sitting there.
I said hullo. He couldn't place my face.
I introduced myself. But not a trace
Of recognition. Then I reminded him
Of this and that. His glance grew deep, kept dim.
And all his daily tortures, all the fears
Of sleepless nights, and all the thoughts, the years,
I saw: but only for a moment: then
A monstrous veil descended once again.
His pupils, like thick glass refracting light,
Looked grey when stared at but could shine with bright
Patterns of rainbows when glimpsed from the side.
Cobwebs are like that too: their grey threads hide
Sparks and rust reds and spots of black and green:
Yet in those pupils nothing could be seen.
Their surface, quite opaquely, showed that they
Had lain a long time in the damp dark clay.

Next month I called on him, hoping to find
A man at ease, refreshed, in his right mind.
But many questioners had had their say,
Ten thousand sleepless nights had passed away,
Too many torturers had probed, and he
Had learned that shadows make good company
And silence is the only wise reply.
The city, in a month, could not defy
The laws that had been taught him year by year.
Day was a traitor, sunlight a spy: his fear

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Made turnkeys of his family, hangmen of guests.
The door's click meant: "More questions. More arrests."
He'd turn his back, prop head on hand, to wait,
Collecting strength enough to concentrate.
His lips pressed tight to make them one thin line.
He hid his eyes lest they should give some sign,
And any sign might tell them what he thought.
The simplest question seemed to have him caught.
He'd hide in shadows, crying "I won't talk"
Because his mind was made of prison rock
So that his cell went with him everywhere.
His wife wept long, kneeling beside his chair.
But maybe it was mostly his child's tears
That finally, released him from his fears.

I thought he'd tell his story in the end.
(Ex-convicts like to speak to an old friend
About their prison days.) I'd learn the truth,
The truth that tyrants hide, the Polish truth.
It flourishes in shadows. Its history
Lives in Siberia where its heroes die,
There, and in dungeons. But what did my friend say.
He said he had forgotten. And, with dismay,
I listened to his silence. His memory was
Written upon, and deeply, but, because
It had long rotted in the dark, my friend
Could not read what was written: "We'd better send
For God. He will remember and tell us all."

Adam MICKIEWICZ (1798–1855)

The Intelligentsia

We always run away, from town to town,
we—intellectuals:
small and shivering, a tribe without a tribe,
a class of ineffectuals.

From country to country, we shift about with our families:
we each have a gramophone,
millions of us. But it's no use. They keep asking:
"Which country is your own?"

And since we don't know, we can only weep
oceans of salt oblations.
Beneath fake palms we write artificial letters
and post them in dirty stations.

Konstanty Ildefons GALCZYNSKI (1906–53)

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John Kenneth Galbraith

Heresy Revisited

An Economist's Notebook in Warsaw and Belgrade

WE CIRCLED from Amsterdam around through Denmark to avoid the forbidden territory of East Germany, and my spirits were improved by a large whisky. We came low into Warsaw over villages which, as in French Canada, string out endlessly along the roads making a continuous line of houses. Behind each dwelling is a ribbon of land a mile or so long and little wider than the house. It is a convivial but inefficient design.

THE WARSAW AIRPORT is a shabby and dreary place even on a spring day. The buildings are of temporary one-storey construction and resemble those of a war-time air base. Warsaw, the planners notwithstanding, suffers from a bad case of urban sprawl—the sprawl in this case taking the form of large blocks of apartments which stand around seemingly at random. The best are ungainly and the worst are ugly, and the ugliness is heightened by the building material which is poor or reconditioned brick. As one gets closer to town the war damage becomes evident; in large areas it is still oppressive. One passes through the part of the city from which the Germans evacuated all of the population in the closing days of the occupation.

I am lodged at the Grand Hotel ORBIS—ORBIS is the official tourist agency—which, like everything else in Warsaw, is still being completed. The rooms are small but adequate and are furnished in Sears-Grand Rapids. Someone supplied me with four nice tulips. Since state property is involved, there is an inventory of all the artifacts tacked on the cupboard door.

I had breakfast in the new hotel dining-room. It was a pleasant although vaguely conventional, slightly too-cushioned room. It was full of people talking in whispers or low voices in a rather conspiratorial way. Behind me were three sinister-looking men who were whispering in English. Presently I heard one of them say, "He has real courage. He wouldn't hesitate to get fired to help us." I decided to listen. But eventually I discovered that they were discussing the chances of chiropractors getting recognition from the regular medical practitioners in Cleveland, Ohio.

THERE IS NOT much traffic on the streets, although the city has a lively aspect. A few of the women are smart in appearance; many more are good-looking. But most of the women and all of the men are a trifle shabby. One senses that respectability requires a good deal of effort and improvisation. The shops are austere by Western standards, although I saw some interesting bookstores, and one department store had a large and lethal-looking inventory of red motorcycles. A solitary pushcart peddler was selling two grades of apples, both rather under-privileged, at Z10 and Z14 a kilo. At the tourist rate the zloty is about four cents or 4d.

On the way I noticed an old woman with a broom of sticks sweeping the streets. For many years I have been reading about these women and, at long last, I felt that I had made spiritual contact with the Slavic world. I also reflected that having old women sweep the streets is greatly inferior to our system of not sweeping them at all.

AT THREE I called by appointment on an old acquaintance who is now a high official in the Planning Ministry. He seemed pleased with the rather technical economic volume—Dorfman, Samuelson, and Solow on *Linear Programming*—that I brought him, and for a while we con-

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versed amicably enough. He is working on long-range planning problems—problems beyond the present plan—and told me that in his view the rate of investment is limited not by the supply of savings but by the amount of investment, and in particular of construction, that can be administered at any time. This capacity to administer investment is the ultimate bottleneck. I pressed him as to whether it was one which investment itself—*i.e.*, in supervisory personnel—could break. He expressed doubts. Nor did he think decentralisation was a remedy. The latter, he argued, was largely a function of the supply of resources. The easier the supply the more one can decentralise administration and risk waste. The fewer the resources, the greater the need to control by centralised administration. He pointed, as an example, to the centralisation of authority over resources which wartime scarcities forced upon the United States. He told me that the present objective is to bring living standards in Poland up to the level of such Western European countries as Holland or Denmark by 1970. This is a formidable goal.

I WENT to lunch with diplomatic and journalist friends. Very pleasant, and we talked about everyone's favourite subject, namely Poland, until mid-afternoon. These are days of great delicacy in the Polish position, with the government attempting to walk a thin line which avoids Titoist heresy on the one hand and keeps an open window westward on the other. The press has been severely limited in recent weeks. The universities remain relatively free (a matter of some immediate personal interest), and the secret police have been reactivated following their suppression or restriction in 1956. The church also remains relatively untroubled. All makes for endlessly interesting discussion. However, I am always a trifle uneasy about such conversation. It is excessively preoccupied with the meaning of the mood and events of the moment—with things that will be forgotten a month hence. And in this discussion of tactics the questions of strategy, of the larger framework, are invariably ignored. We watch to see who is out of step. We never see where the troops are marching.

To-day was fascinating. At 9.30 I departed Warsaw to Lowicz, some eighty kilometres to the west. I had as guides two agricultural experts, one a merry stump of a man with an enormous moustache and a plausible resemblance to Captain Kidd. A young member of the university came along as a translator. My piratical friend told me how, over peasant resistance, he had introduced fertiliser in the highly conservative villages where he had worked. At night he spread fertiliser on the growing fields in the form of a cross. When the priest was unable to explain the miracle, he stepped in. He asked me if I were a Catholic, and when I told him that I was not he went on to observe that Polish peasants were perversely willing to spend more money on their salvation in the next world than in this. We paid a visit to the house of one of the villagers and the nephews joined us.

MY QUESTIONS frequently provoked long debates over answers, but it was a merry party. They asked me the size of the farm on which I was born. When I told them 150 acres, they said, "Oh, you *were* indeed kulaks." When I slowed down on the cake and sausages, my host said, "You must fulfil your plan."

On the way home we were stopped for speeding, and it also developed that our car did not have the required first-aid kit. But the driver told the policeman that he had an "American professor" aboard. The cop put his head in the window, looked me over, and then waved us on. A wise and discriminating system of law enforcement.

To-night I had dinner with H. L., a New York banker, C. H., a professor of economics, and D. C., a Washington correspondent. We talked as usual about the Polish economy. The feeling of Americans about socialism seems to me quite a lot like that towards sex. There is a deep fascination, a desire to look, and if possible to touch, but no desire to become involved.

THIS MORNING I gave my first lecture. It was not a resounding success. The audience at the outset consisted mostly of faculty members. After I was well started a number of students came rushing in as though in answer to a riot call. I cannot persuade myself that the lecture was widely understood. I am glad that I did not have to listen to it in Polish.

After the lecture I fell into conversation with a young teacher who took part in the Bor uprising and who was seriously wounded fighting just outside the building where he now teaches. (The university is on the banks of the Vistula and was one of the focal points of the conflict.)

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Although he is anything but pro-Russian, he was not critical of the Russians for failing to intervene. He thought they recognised that the uprising was designed to anticipate them and was in degree directed against them. Therefore, they had a right to keep their hands off. By contrast, he was critical of what he characterised as the romantic strategic concepts of the London Poles who believed that such a seizure of power would give them a position of strength against the Russians. He thought the Czechs had been wiser. "They postponed their revolt until the right time: the only damage in Prague was to one mirror and two glass doors."

MOSTLY I reflected on the drabness of life. One gets the impression that people put on a very brave front, but only as the result of infinite effort. I looked into a toy shop which had the worst trinkets imaginable at very high prices. There was a long queue before what I took to be a dram shop, although I am not sure. There are quite a few soldiers, mostly officers, on the streets, but they are not very noticeable, for many of the civilians wear a green-khaki coat that has the appearance of a uniform. This may be the problem of socialism. Planners can provide for everything but colour, and they cannot allow for that because so much of it is associated with idiocy great and small. In any case, the people of Poland have more liberty than variety.

In the late afternoon I had a visit from a Polish novelist. He was anxious to know how and by whom I had been invited to Poland. Finally he blurted out: "Surely you are not a Marxist, are you?" I told him I wasn't but that I might be distinguished from some non-Marxists by a realisation that Poland had certain problems of location to live with. He nodded.

To-night I went to an interesting dinner party at the British Embassy. We had a long talk about events since 1956. The ambassador has good analytical sense and gave an able interpretation of events. I asked him about an alternative hypothesis, namely, that the Polish government is making the right sounds on foreign policy while using its autonomy to get ahead with needed changes on the economic front. He thought this at least possible.

The ambassador pointed out that Poland was the only eastern bloc country where all questions —including questions of party strategy—can be freely discussed with members of the Communist Party. This makes Poland the most interesting of all these countries. While the ambassador is good, at least one member of his staff is a primitive idiot. No American abroad is ever quite so bad as the British imperial strategist whose views are derived in equal parts from Kipling, Kitchener, and Johnny Walker.

AT SIX we went together to the *Palais Jean Casimir* at the university to a reception given by the rector. I saw a great many people that I knew—it is amazing how quickly one's acquaintance widens in a city of this size. Dinner at the Bristol, and the party continued until midnight. We ranged over the problems of the United States, West German, and Polish economies. One of the Polish economists asked me how I would run a country like Poland within a broadly socialist framework. I replied that I would keep agriculture private since both capitalist and socialist experience showed the difficulty of applying socialism to this sector. (I hoped this might be considered consistent with a "broadly socialist framework.") For large enterprises I suggested that the critical question was managerial autonomy and not ownership. The problem is to accord them the requisite independence of decision and in a context where the incentives favour socially desirable decisions. This does not exclude planning of investment aggregates—the amount to go to steel as compared with (say) cement.

Trade and small business, I suggested, should be the grounds for debate. However, I added that I had difficulty seeing the rationale for public ownership in this area. Few get rich; the market incentives obviously make people work hard. And if agriculture must be private, the acquisitive mentality, which will certainly exist in the case of trade, will not be unique.

My friend was much interested. He said he thought Poland was moving towards some such formula. He added, "Certainly if I am ever the adviser to a socialist America, I will not urge public ownership for handicrafts or small trade." But he concluded by saying—as everyone else does—that something must first be done to get price and wage relatives straightened out. If prices and costs are out of line autonomy, whether of small enterprises or large, leads to the wrong decisions.

I asked why the workers' state treated the peasants well and the workers less well—a fact often mentioned in conversation and clearly shown by the statistics. He replied that this was "Marxism accommodated to practical necessity."

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The peasants occupy the position of strategic power in a country heavily dependent on their willingness to produce efficiently.

STALINISM in Poland is referred to as "the terrible past which may well lie before us."

THERE is a good deal of confusion in Polish agricultural thinking, as the discussion this morning brought out. The importance of raising agricultural productivity is stressed. This would get the same output with fewer people. But there is also worry about the number of young people who are leaving the farms, and you hear it argued that peasant incomes must be good to keep people on the land. Yet everyone also agrees that Polish agriculture is over-populated. These inconsistencies occasionally come into a single conversation.

This afternoon I strolled through the shopping area. It has suddenly become very warm and a large crowd was out. There was a long queue at a stand where lemons were for sale. In a food store there were two other long queues—one I think for freshly ground coffee, although I couldn't see without being obvious. I went into the largest department store which was far from prepossessing. I was impressed by the energy with which people dashed up the escalators until I saw that this was necessary for they were not running. The merchandise looks wretchedly poor.

A terrific thunderstorm cut short our tour, and I returned to the hotel for dinner. My food habits are becoming a trifle monotonous. Pending completion of the kitchen, the hotel serves only ham or eggs or both. I have had these whenever I have eaten here and, although excellent, the possible combinations are somewhat limited. The vodka is extremely helpful.

At the university celebrations Oskar Lange commented on the brilliance and variety of the academic dress in contrast with the University of Chicago. "You see the advantage of socialism when it has feudal traditions."

I NEEDED SOMETHING to read to-day and found a cheap edition of Frank Norris' *The Octopus*, product of a Leipzig publisher. The jacket says it is a valuable and vivid account of the grinding tendencies of American capitalism. I would think it is a troublesome point for the average local reader that the grindees are ten-thousand-acre wheat-ranchers. Kulaks. The jacket also explains, helpfully, that Norris' anarchistic tendencies are an "error."

I came home early. We are housed in a fine, large, 19th-century Lublin hotel—a pleasant and spacious change after the compact modern rooms of the Grand Hotel in Warsaw. There was a slight *contretemps* when we discovered they had, logically enough, made up two beds in the bedroom—one for myself and one for my charming guide—and none in the large living-room which I occupy. Things were straightened out.

The police patrol in pairs here with slung rifles. There is a soft drink in Poland called Agricola.

I HAD planned to give but one lecture in Cracow. However, three had been scheduled and I agreed to the change. Everyone was pleased when I said that I was being exploited by the workers' state. This reminds me of the most popular Polish story. "Do you know the difference between capitalism and communism? Under capitalism man exploits man. Under communism it is just the reverse."

After the lecture I had an odd accident. With one or two of the professors I strolled through the streets and parks—the latter are rich and green and bursting with lilacs—and eventually I turned off close to my hotel. Then I discovered that I was not on the right street and also that on my arrival this morning I had not noticed the name of my hotel. After some search I made my problem known—or tried to—in another hotel. The clerk took me to be a candidate for the local insane asylum. My having failed to notice either the name of the hotel or that of the street seemed to him wholly implausible. The conversation was in German and I was conscious that I was making no sense. But presently he directed me to another hotel where I would at least be understood. This turned out to be mine.

IT IS SAID here that during the Hungarian revolt everyone behaved like someone else. The Russians behaved like Germans. The Hungarians behaved like Poles. The Poles behaved like Czechs. The Czechs behaved like swine.

LAST NIGHT in Lublin I investigated the position of lawyers in the social state. A few practise privately. The rest are joined in collectives, and fees are charged for the group as a whole and

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divided with due regard to rank. The principle may come from the Wall Street firm of Sullivan & Cromwell.

A WELL-INFORMED INDIVIDUAL has given me an account of the economic policy of the early 'fifties. Investment goods naturally had a high priority in the Six-Year Plan, and in 1951 and 1952 the tensions accompanying the Korean War brought a great increase in armament investment. Adjusting for the relatively low level of capital goods prices, he thinks that with defence Poland was investing about 40 per cent of national income in 1952. This brought a reduction in living standards and, along with the collectivisation, cultivated the discontent which culminated in the 1956 disorders. Now arms investment has been much reduced, but there is still a deep conviction that this generation must sacrifice for the next—"We face twenty years of austerity." I asked him why this generation should give up so much for the next—why, since it isn't a question of starvation or physical privation, people now living might not be given a better break at the price of a slower rate of growth. He said there was an increasing tendency to make this argument.

MY LAST lecture was at ten at the university. The attendance was good and the discussion, which was alert and friendly, lasted until about noon. Then I called on Lange at the Parliament. The Chamber was in session, and we listened to a speech or two while Lange—who sits on the ministerial bench—was being told of our arrival. About half the seats were filled. In reassuring parallel with Western democracy no one was paying the slightest attention. The position here is an interesting one and not well understood. In the democratic state the representative requirements of government take far more people than can, in fact, be employed in the business of governing. To avoid the disaster of their participation, but while also avoiding the appearance of idleness, we have speeches. Any number of people can be occupied in making speeches or, more particularly, in serving as an audience. While it is often supposed that speeches are for the purpose of communicating ideas, in fact they are primarily for the purpose of disguising the unemployment that is inevitable in the democratic process. I was glad to see that this great democratic invention is also useful in a Communist state.

AT FIVE I was to be interviewed by the overseas English service of the Polish radio. But after some reflection I declined. The questions, which they had given me in advance, were quite innocent. But any overseas radio operation is for propaganda purposes. I suspect that scholarly goals are best served by avoiding even the appearance of such involvement. I wouldn't advise a Polish professor who is in the United States to go on the Voice of America. I did give a press interview which was briefly reported.

During the afternoon I had a long talk with a former American Communist Party member who was either deported to Poland some years ago or who left in anticipation of immediate deportation. He has seen a lot of Polish workers and is an old and experienced party worker and organiser. He says the workers are in a difficult mood. If asked, they would say, with all sincerity, that they are against a return to capitalism. But they are equally against the present order.

I asked him what the workers wanted. He said, "I don't really know—just a better life. They want a system that works. They don't know what that is."

Finally, I asked him how he found his own life in Poland. He said, "The work is interesting enough. But if you want the truth, I'm homesick as hell." I would gather he thinks socialism still might work, but not in Poland.

He told me his wife and child have just got a visa to visit the United States. Now he has to struggle to get a Polish exit permit for them while the United States visa is still valid. He made an interesting conversational slip. "My wife was never a Communist. She is completely honest."

ONLY ONCE was there a suggestion of secret police activity. A foreign diplomat with whom I talked said his house was not safe and he kept the radio going while we conversed. Nothing that he said seemed very dangerous by Polish standards, and it is my over-all impression that the police, if they do listen, must be astonished when they hear anything that isn't critical of the government.

More generally, the problem of Poland seems to be one of reconciling a very high state of intellectual achievement with a very low level of economic life. Everyone is aware that life is better in Western Europe, and this is the standard for comparison. The result is deep dissatisfaction and articulate and uninhibited criticism.

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A narrow and restrained economic life is no doubt possible in a culturally backward community, and many such communities would think Polish standards highly satisfactory. But such contentment cannot so easily co-exist with a brilliantly critical intellectual life.

Geography makes a socialist economic order more or less an imperative. Even the least reconciled do not talk of much change here. While good relations with the U.S.S.R. are essential, even the most ardent Communists with whom I talked consider themselves Poles first. Certainly the notion that all Communists take their orders willingly and automatically from Moscow—Tito, of course, excepted—can be a prime source of error.

It is hard to overestimate the desire of the Polish intellectuals, again including a good many members of the high bureaucracy and press—and in particular the university people—to be considered part of the West. Literally everyone you encounter is dreaming of a visit to Western Europe or the United States. Without this prospect one imagines that life for quite a few, especially of the younger people, would seem hopelessly dull and uninviting. A "Ford Fellowship" is the new Jerusalem.

My lectures are to be published as a book in Poland and both translation and publication have been arranged. Many apologies have been made for the inability to transmit royalties, but they are to accumulate to my account in zlotys. So I shall have a certain capital position come the revolution.

WE ARRIVED in Belgrade about noon. I walked for an hour or two through the main shopping streets. The contrast with Warsaw could scarcely be more striking. The stores are filled with goods and, partly since there are more imports, they seem to be of far better quality. There is more traffic and the people lack the drab, uniform appearance of Poland. It is immediately evident that this is a far less egalitarian society. This latter is an important point.

Visitors regularly attribute to wealth what they should attribute to its distribution. One forms his impressions of the well-being of a community from the number of automobiles on the streets, the number of well-dressed women on the sidewalks, the elegance of the shops, and the number of fine houses or apartment buildings. But only a small minority needs to be well off to suggest such opulence. A community with a higher but more nearly equal distribution of income can have fewer such amenities or luxuries and thus give the impression of less wealth and well-being.

The difference from Warsaw is also in the cafés, the chestnut trees along the streets, and above all in the varied, pleasant buildings of what is at least a slightly older European city. These are wonderfully more agreeable than the stark social realism of Poland. And even the modern buildings of which there are many in the parts of the city that were damaged, are softer and less severe than in Poland.

AT DINNER TIME there was a severe storm, and while making my way into the hotel restaurant I met a tall, handsome, and (by the standards of this part of the world) very well-dressed woman in her late twenties. She seemed to be sheltering from the rain. She smiled and asked me how long I had been in Belgrade. I told her and invited her to have a drink with me. This led on to dinner.

She makes her living being agreeable to visitors, more especially those in the smaller and "more discreet" hotels. She lives with her parents, both office workers, but has a small apartment for more relaxed moments. The work is not demanding, and she attributed her good looks to the fact that she gets a lot of rest. She says she meets an interesting class of people of whom, on the whole, she finds the Germans best combine affectionate and gentlemanly manners with requisite intellect. Americans she somewhat unpredictably described as "much like Englishmen." Her greatest problem is the high cost of clothes, and she listed some prices which did sound rather stiff. Her apartment is also not very satisfactory—not sufficiently private—and this is difficult to remedy in so overcrowded a city. Her line of work may not enjoy a particularly high priority.

After dinner I strolled with my informant to her apartment but then discontinued my research with a small gift. In the course of conversation she had mentioned the unfortunate ubiquitousness of police surveillance in "these Communist countries," and this, along with the novelty of my surroundings, acted as a reinforcement to normal virtue.

A MOST interesting day. This morning I strolled around Belgrade looking for pictures and found

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a few interesting people and street scenes. Then at ten I called by appointment on the undersecretary of the Planning Board. We had a long and informative talk punctuated by schnapps and coffee. He thinks the Yugoslavs have succeeded in breaking through the crust of backwardness and getting the industry that is necessary for sustained growth. The worst problems are the continuing imbalance in the external position—the large balance of payments deficit—and the tendency (as in Poland) for more gains to accrue to peasants than to workers. We talked about time preferences in planning—how much should be sacrificed in the present for a higher living standard in the distant future. The Yugoslavs are not so Calvinist as the Poles. They are committed to supplying consumer goods, including those that must be imported, in the present. This is in line with a pronouncement of Tito who has said that those who won socialism should enjoy at least some of its fruits. The great current argument is over how much reliance should be placed on foreign aid and foreign assistance. Should this be taken while the taking is good? Shouldn't every opportunity be seized to raise living standards as well as investment? But isn't dependence on such foreign aid dangerous? Wouldn't economic independence at a lower level of consumption and investment be wiser in order to protect political independence?

I SAW Tito to-day. He was proceeding at a high speed in a four-car convoy when we met him. A motorcycle outrider moved us off the road and to a stop while he passed. It occurs to me that men in power, if they are wise, will always travel at a moderate rate of speed and preferably in modest cars. Nothing can possibly create a worse impression than big black limousines tearing through the countryside and forcing common people to jump for their lives.

I was taken to dinner in a delightful outdoor restaurant on a hill near Belgrade. After the austerity of Poland I still find myself revelling in the luxury of life here—excellent food and wine, good service, and people who seem to be enjoying themselves. I suspect that I am too much of a hedonist to make a good modern socialist. The same might be true of the Yugoslavs.

I HAD HOPED to wander through villages and old towns, and take pictures, and I had made my wishes tolerably clear. But the socialist inevitable happened—I was taken to an experiment station, a hybrid-corn-breeding station, an irrigation experimental farm, and a state farm. These are the only presentable culture. Incidentally, the experiment stations seemed very good—far better equipped, more workmanlike, and more self-confident than those I saw in Poland.

At mid-morning we had schnapps and vermouth and at noon in Novi Sad a notable meal with more alcohol. Then we had wine and soda during the afternoon. I consumed lightly, having regard to the hot weather and the danger of extreme drowsiness. One of my hosts asked if we were unaccustomed to drinking in the United States.

One of my guides had been an exchange student in plant genetics at the University of Illinois. Competent, self-assured, and determined to raise the level of his science in Yugoslavia, he was a monument to the virtues of this enterprise.

I arrived back in Belgrade very late for a party given by one of the cultural attachés at the embassy. It was a nice homelike party with well-groomed, slim, and attractive young wives getting systematically stewed.

A CURRENT Yugoslav identification of the difference between capitalism and socialism: "Capitalism makes social mistakes, and socialism makes capital mistakes."

AT LAST an easy day, my first since I arrived from Poland. I got up late, worked on my lectures, and later went for a stroll. I am still impressed by the air of well-being and by the number of good-looking and well-groomed women. At twelve I gave my first lecture. It was not translated, but all attending were given a full text in Serbo-Croat. The room was packed; there was a good number of high officials, also a sizable delegation from the embassy. By arrangement there was no discussion of this lecture, it being purely historical, although I was challenged in a friendly way for citing Joan Robinson on Marx's view of Say's Law.

In the evening I went to a reception at the ambassador's residence—small and pleasant—and then on to dinner with two high Yugoslav economic officials. Both are old Partisans and both had had a period of post-war service in Washington. The result, which I believe to be typical, was that they had developed a deep

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interest in American politics and folkways. Both are strong Yugoslav nationalists but also more than half American in outlook and interests. Nothing in this part of the world strikes one with more force than the existence of pro-American Communists.

We dined on an outdoor terrace at the Metropole, a vast, newly-completed hotel of most luxurious aspect. No workers' barracks this.

My second lecture was uneventful with a good attendance. The American ambassador attended, although I am not sure he found the subject fascinating.

The Yugoslavs, in their concern for enquiring what is to be retained from Marx and what is to be rejected, engage in a great deal more theoretical discussion than one encounters now in Warsaw. Preoccupation in Warsaw is far more with practical problems. It could also be that Marx is taken less seriously in Poland, so there is less concern with revision.

My third lecture to-day went about as usual. A number of high government and party people were on hand, and there is to be a general discussion following my final lecture to-morrow. I lost the United States Ambassador but picked up the Canadian.

At luncheon, which included two or three leading Yugoslav economists—Marxists, and one a leading party theorist—we discussed the relevance of modern Western economic theory to the problems of economic planning. They suggested that neo-Keynesian models were the most important macroeconomic guide and that the Leontief input-output analysis, given the aggregate system, was especially important as a planning model. One suggested that Leontief was more important for a socialist than a capitalist economy and added an amusing observation: "You might bear in mind that if the Soviets had behaved wisely, Wassily Leontief would have grown up in Russia. His work would then have been done in its logical context."

My last lecture to-day with an hour's discussion following. I am glad they are over although I think, on the whole, they were fairly successful. Someone has noted that they were the first such full-dress exposition by a bourgeois economist in a Communist country since the Russian revolution. I find this nourishing to my vanity.

This afternoon I called by appointment on the editor of the leading economic journal and an important party theoretician. He thinks Yugoslav economists are going in too much for econometrics and formal and irrelevant theory. He said he gathered that there were similar tendencies in the United States. I told him that, since it was possible that we had even more economists than economic problems, something needed to be done to keep our profession employed. He said the Yugoslav situation was less luxurious.

I leave with the distinct impression that the "market socialism" of Yugoslavia is a going concern. The clue is in the price system. In Poland nearly all prices are fixed by the state. If the price relatives are not right, then the incentive structure is unreliable. A firm that expands output at a loss—if it happens that its prices are low and its costs high—may be performing a useful service. And the higher the output and hence the higher the loss, the greater the service. The Poles recognise the problem and, as I have noted, they are desperately striving to reform their price structure. But this takes a year or two. By the time it is finished another reform will be needed. There have already been four or five "reforms."

The Yugoslavs solve this problem by leaving about 70 per cent of prices to the determination of the individual enterprise. Not even Belgrade hotel prices are fixed, and as the result of the completion of the Metropole prices of hotel rooms are coming down. The individual (public) enterprise has the power to adjust its prices, and the problem of price relatives is self-solving—if the prices are too low, the firm can raise them and vice-versa. This means in turn that earnings can be used as the test of performance and also that earnings can be partly shared by management and workers as an incentive. The 30 per cent of prices that are fixed include utilities and things like steel or fertilisers where there is a particular interest in the price. Workers' councils, a development of recent years, are also credited with a considerable improvement in the operation of the individual enterprise. All in all the Yugoslav system seems much more flexible and pragmatic than that of the Poles. Clearly, also, it is better designed to incur the disfavour of the Soviets. To the extent that capitalism is identified with free prices and the market, it represents a backsliding to capitalism and capitalist incentives. (No concessions are

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made or contemplated on the issue of state ownership of the means of production, however.) There is much interest in Yugoslavia as to how far the Poles can go in unwinding their economy without having an ideological conflict with the Russians on this point. The notion that satellite economic policy should follow the "social schematism" of the Russian development seems to me the most dangerous mistake the Soviets are making. Adaptation to the higher living standard, the less self-sufficient character, the non-socialised agriculture, and the cultural and economic mores of these countries would seem to be an imperative. Indeed, this is the lesson of the Stalinist period. Yet one guesses that the Soviets still believe that ideology as distinct from such "objective circumstance" must be the controlling factor.

The Yugoslavs, incidentally, are completely set in their determination to pursue their own course. Of this there cannot be the slightest doubt. There is a domestic difference between those who would decide economic issues more dogmatically and those who argue with great vigour and pride for flexible and pragmatic socialism. But I did not encounter anyone who was disposed to think that Russian doctrine and experience should be considered the guide.

We are approaching the white cliffs of Dover. I am glad that there is nothing about the British economy which at the moment stirs my curiosity.

D. J. Enright

The First Day

The flags are out: so admirably designed,
a red blush
On a white face. A good wine's burning bush.

The horsemen undertake the First Riding;
The calligraphers perform the First Writing;
Readers indulge in the First Stupefiction;
Film fans engage in the First Cinemaddiction.

The girls in the alleys, like a row of rice-cakes,
Offer the First of something else (and so indeed
They describe it, the more humorous, to the First
passing Rakes).
In lieu of a solid marriage mat and a good feed
We wish them a rich calendar of ancient customs
and customers.

Angel voices of children mock the First Tall Fair
Stranger.
The First Hangover takes root. Mr. Robber, over
a sober supper, plans the First Crime.
The First Love Suicides look for a place marked Danger.
Between the First Vomits a poet dodges nimbly home—
feeling useless, not for the first time—
To discharge the First Poem.

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Joseph and Stewart Alsop

The Washington Correspondent

Some Memoirs of the Trade

NEWSPAPER reporting is a craft or trade, like undertaking, which it sometimes resembles. It is a trade, of course, that has its own well-defined requirements. All reporters need sturdy constitutions, good feet, and some feeling for the English language. For men in our branch of the trade, which is political reporting, a knowledge of history and an interest in political processes are also highly desirable. These traits help political reporters as interest in sports helps sports reporters. You must never be bored by the subject you are trying to learn about and write about. Otherwise you will learn very little and what you write will surely bore your readers into fits.

This, then (plus a job in Washington), is the limited equipment that an aspiring young man or woman really needs to embark on a reportorial career in Washington. It is also a good idea for the aspirant to realise, at the very outset, that the common notions about the life and work of a Washington correspondent are very nearly as silly as the common notions about newspaper life in general that have been engendered by *The Front Page* and kindred dramas.

A Washington correspondent does not get his news from a series of delightfully convenient pipelines. We have published our fair share of major exclusive news, but we have never had a pipeline. We both wish we could have had one; it would have made our work a lot easier; but pipelines to really major news simply do not exist, in our experience. Again, you do not get your news from leaks at cocktail parties, where Washington's highest officials, gorged with canapés and loose-tongued from fine wines and costly liquors, spill out all they know to eager audiences. Cocktail parties are a melancholy and familiar feature of life in Washington, undoubtedly. But they are principally attended by Washington's bizarre sub-species of the human race, the hat-bearing females. The conversation most often concerns real estate, which is the popular substitute for sex among the kind of Washingtonians who regularly go to cocktail parties. High officials only appear at cocktail parties when they are forced to do so, as when a foreign embassy is putting on a show for a visiting potentate; and even then, they usually hurry in and out like the White Rabbit, murmuring apologies instead of spilling secrets. We have never heard of any case of a leak at a cocktail party, possibly because we almost never go to cocktail parties ourselves.

Finally, just to finish off the last tattered remnant of the Washington-correspondent-legend, the nation's capital is not full of persons who make a practice of supplying reporters with bundles of classified documents. We have never encountered even one person of this sort. In fact, neither of us has ever read a classified document since the year 1947, when James V. Forrestal and Robert Patterson, in their capacities as Secretary of the Navy and Secretary of War, gave us a modified clearance to do the first authoritative article on guided missiles that was ever offered to the general public. Furthermore, if anyone now made us a present of a classified document, we should reject it as firmly as we should reject a pot of poison. Without such clearance as Forrestal and Patterson honoured us with long ago, any reporter is a fool to touch a finger to documents of this kind. Nowadays particularly, and particularly if he intends to publish what the government does not want published, a reporter

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needs to be able to assert, with perfect truth, that he has used no information coming to him from any classified source.*

SO MUCH for the legend. What then is it like to be a Washington correspondent? Basically, it is very much like being a reporter anywhere else. You work with a different sort of raw material, politics, and with a different sort of people, politicians and officials. You also inhabit a different sort of city, with its own peculiar charm and its own peculiar dullness. (Social conversation in Washington is almost invariably composed, in equal parts, of personal gossip, political dispute and the eternal news of real estate, which fascinates Washingtonians because so many of the city's politicians and officials are only birds of passage, and are therefore always changing nests. Only the rare eccentrics, like Alice Roosevelt Longworth, can ever be induced to talk about books; and the arts, history, philosophy, and such-like subjects are best avoided, unless you want the reputation of an infernal bore.) But although the Washington correspondent's raw material and range of acquaintance and place of habitation are all localised in this manner, the rules of his craft remain the eternal rules of the whole reporting craft.

His feet, to cite the first rule, are a much more important part of a reporter's body than his head. Rarely—very rarely—the newspaper business produces a news analyst who can spot the essential outline of a situation from the vantage-point of his own desk, with no more help than the morning newspapers may give him. Raymond Aron of *Le Figaro* is one of these rare creatures. Another is Walter Lippmann, who can go on making perfectly good sense about current news when he is taking a long semi-vacation in Maine. But both Aron and Lippmann take great pains to refresh their analytical powers by frequent, direct contact with people and events. Not even the most astute analyst can possibly know what the news means by sheer mental telepathy.

We too were columnists as Lippmann and Aron are; and one of us is still a columnist. But as columnists, we always regarded ourselves as reporters first and foremost, no different from any other reporters except in having a somewhat wider liberty of judgment and expression. We tried, and the surviving columnist still tries, never to print a column lacking at least one previously unpublished and significant item of factual information. So the rule of the reporter's feet applied and still applies to us, just as much as it applies to anyone else. In Washington terms, the rule of the feet means that a reporter should try to see—not telephone—at least four officials or politicians every working day. This works out to about twenty-four major interviews a week, which should be further supplemented by casual contacts. The telephone, of course, is an essential instrument in the newspaper business. All reporters, no matter how successful, spend an inordinate amount of time telephoning other people to ask for appointments and waiting for appointments in other people's ante-rooms—and the more important the other people are, the more troublesome the telephoning and the longer the wait in the ante-room. But the telephone is in the same category as public relations men. It, or they, may be employed to make arrangements for getting information; but neither it, nor they, should be used as a direct channel of information. This sub-clause of the rule of the feet tends to pain public relations men, who always wish to speak for their masters. Fortunately it gives no pain to the telephone company.

The essential rule of the rule is simple enough. If you get out, and see what is going on yourself, and talk to a great many people who are responsibly involved in what is going on, you can hardly help doing a good job of reporting. One way or another, significant developments come to your notice in the early stages; and so you always find something to say that is worth saying, or you observe something that is worth describing. For ourselves, since we also practise as reporters overseas and even as combat-reporters when the occasion arises, we carry the rule of the feet a degree further than is perhaps usual in Washington. Having reached the dreary stage in middle life when one tends to come apart at the seams, we do the dreary exercises that are needful to keep the seams reasonably

* One reason why American political reporting to-day is less informative and vivid and above all less complete than it used to be is simply the proliferation of classification stamps in this Washington of ours in which such a thing hardly existed only two decades ago. Read the "pumpkin papers" that Alger Hiss stole for Whittaker Chambers, and you will see how pitifully insignificant and un-secret the government's supposed secrets then were. To-day, as someone remarked, all papers in all government departments are classified, except for one kind only—the toilet paper. But in the Pentagon, there are probably "Confidential" Men's Rooms.

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well-caulked. Otherwise, we could not have clambered down a net into a landing-craft off Inchon, or gone on a patrol in the Malayan jungle, or followed a French battalion on operations in the Algerian hills—which are all things one or the other of us has had to do in our years of working together.

That patrol in Malaya was far the worst; for the jungle there is like a mountainous swamp, if you can imagine such a thing. The swamp also nourishes a thick, rank vegetation that always fills your hand with spines if you grasp a branch to pull yourself upwards in the slime or to slow your slime-speeded descent. The patrol was composed of hardened British youngsters with the good wind of nineteen-year-olds. It was led by a Borneo tracker, a little Dyak with hair as long as the famous locks of the Seven Sutherland sisters and pointed gold teeth alternately enamelled red and green. This ex-head-hunter seemed frail and even rather girlish until the plunge into the jungle, after which he never departed from a steady, light trot. Keeping up with him was essential, because the next man ahead in a jungle patrol merges into the jungle scene at any distance beyond 25 feet; and if you lose sight of his always disappearing rear, you lose the patrol. Keeping up very nearly killed the reporter. But at any rate he did keep up, unlike the athletic escort officer whom Sir Gerald Templer hopefully sent along to watch the ignominious collapse of an ageing American journalist. This was a consolation for the reporter, though a disappointment for General Templer, who enjoys practical jokes. The other consolation was seeing what the jungle war was like.

YET we do not wish to suggest that keeping moving is the be-all and the end-all of the reporting trade; for there is a second rule almost as important as the rule of feet. Besides getting out and seeing the thing at first hand and asking the question yourself, you must also have some general idea of the right questions to ask. Events you can observe, but problems you have to ask about. Your feet only carry you to the politicians and officials who are the sources of your information about problems. It is asking the right questions that makes politicians and officials into sources of news.

This word source is as commonly abused, in talk about the newspaper business, as that other word, pipeline, which we have already warned against. People speak of a newspaperman's sources as though these sources were so many freely bubbling, always gushing springs. Yet the voluntary source is almost as rare as hen's teeth. In our combined experience, indeed, there has only been one instance when one of us was spontaneously offered a really big news story, complete in all its details. It was in the darkest moment of the last war, after the fall of France and before the battle of Britain. The senior of these reporters was then almost more engaged than a reporter ought to be in the great controversy over the American rôle in the struggle against the dictators. One evening—surely it can now be told—he received an unexpected visit from the astute and unconventional John Foster. Foster is now an eminent Queen's Counsel and member of parliament, but in those days he was an attaché at the British Embassy in Washington. Throughout the previous week, Foster had watched with agonised apprehension an exchange of telegrams between Sir Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt about Britain's desperate need for destroyers. Churchill had gravely warned that the destroyer-shortage might permit a German landing in Britain. He had begged for a few of the scores of over-age destroyers in the American Navy's mothball fleet. Roosevelt had replied non-committally but very discouragingly. Foster, who had an uncanny understanding of the tides of American opinion, had then decided to do a very bold thing. Without authorisation from his superiors in the embassy, he had decided to tell the reporter about this super-secret exchange between Churchill and Roosevelt, and about the value to Britain of the destroyers America did not need. The resulting quiet conversation in a Georgetown garden led on to the powerful agitation for transfer to Britain of the over-age destroyers (but not before the reporter had asked Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox whether this transfer would serve American interests). Many others joined the effort. Big guns were made to bark in favour of the destroyer transfer—the reporter and Walter Lippmann worked together on the radio speech that General Pershing delivered; and if memory serves, Archie McLeish was one of the authors of the companion-speech by Admiral Stanley. All sorts of persons with influence on Roosevelt were persuaded to go to the White House to make similar but more private speeches. In these ways a climate was created that helped to make possible the famous destroyer deal of that summer.

But to return to our subject, a reporter may

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go through life without ever having important information volunteered to him as John Foster volunteered the destroyer story on that long-ago evening. How then can one develop these famous sources, that all fairly successful reporters undoubtedly need to have? The answer is really rather simple. The vast majority of politicians and officials are passionately interested in the problems they have to deal with. They enjoy talking about those problems with anyone who can discuss the problems fairly intelligently. Other things being equal, they like their own pet problems to be sensibly presented to the general public.

UNDERTAKING is a necessary public function, and so is reporting. Undertaking, beyond question, generally offers larger material rewards. Reporting, in compensation, offers larger intangible rewards. Above all, reporting offers the sense of being *engagé* in the political process of one's own time. The reporter who is not consciously *engagé* is in fact likely to be a very bad and unsuccessful reporter. Of course no reporter should indulge in excessive political partisanship. Of course, all reporters must also be sternly loyal to the facts, whether the facts help or harm friend or foe. But even if a reporter meets both these tests, he must still be *engagé*, if only because he himself is a most necessary part of the political progress.

In a democratic society, although the politicians and officials rather often forget it, the master is the people. The reporter who covers national affairs is, in effect, the people's eyes and ears. He has the task of making the people's government the people's business. He is the instrument that creates an informed public opinion. The very greatest political leaders may mould public opinion by their own, individual utterances. But in the first place, Churchill, Roosevelt, and, in a lesser measure, Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer, are the only democratic leaders who have had this personal, direct opinion-moulding power in our own time. And in the second place, even the greatest democratic leader cannot *make* public opinion; he can only persuade the people to see the facts already known to them in a new and different light. In the democracies opinion is mainly made, in truth, by the daily publication of an infinite variety of facts, sometimes trivial, sometimes profoundly important, sometimes commonplace, sometimes desperately remote from normal human experience, but all somehow bearing on the national situation. No one has ever explained how this daily factual bombardment is transmuted into public opinion. One city with a poor newspaper will get far fewer facts than another city with a good newspaper. One sober, industrious citizen will read only his newspaper's sports and comic pages, while another, living in an identical ranch-house next door, will follow the national and foreign news with minute attention. Apparently the process works by the law of averages, like the processes involving sub-atomic particles, simply because so many people are daily exposed to so many facts. At any rate, the process does work quite remarkably well, when the facts are fully and convincingly published.

Tell the people the truth about their situation, and people will respond to any challenge that the truth offers. That is the fundamental rule of democratic society. If you do not believe it, you do not believe in democracy.

We remember George Kennan writing about which facts of the national situation ought to be revealed to the American people and which facts ought to be concealed. With characteristic naïveté (the mixture of extreme naïveté and genuine intellectual brilliance constitutes Kennan's peculiar charm) Kennan frankly wrote that if the American people were told *all* the facts of their situation, they would surely do the most awful and unspeakable things. He was writing before the final collapse of the American atomic monopoly. He did not spell out his meaning; but it was simple enough. He meant that if the American people were clearly warned of the probable meaning to them of great numbers of atomic and thermo-nuclear weapons in the hands of the Kremlin, they might insist on a preventive policy while the advantage still lay with the United States. This was not the national choice that Kennan favoured. Kennan is not and never has been a convinced believer in government "of the people, by the people, for the people." As his friend Isaiah Berlin once remarked, Kennan believes "in government by a nest of brooding Salazars." So Kennan saw nothing wrong about himself and the other members of the sacred circle of officials having "clearance" making the greatest national choice of the post-war years, without even telling the nation in plain terms that there was a choice to make.

We disagree with Kennan, and we have always disagreed with him, both as to the practice and as to the principle. We never believed in

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preventive war, and we never heard preventive war advocated by a Western leader of any consequence, with the sole, somewhat unexpected exception of Aneurin Bevan. (At the forgotten time when Bevan was furious with his Cabinet-colleagues for not breaking the Berlin blockade with an armoured column, he told one of us that preventive war "would of course have to be considered if Soviet steel output ever passed 25 million tons a year!")

Yet a democracy in which the officials make the great choices is like a proud household in which the footmen make the great choices. The footmen may be admirable Crichtons, every last one of them—and there are few officials we have admired more than Kennan. But this way of making choices in such a society as ours is morally wrong and inherently bad. It is morally wrong because factors that ought to have no part in the equation are not purged out of the equation before the solution is reached. In the choice we have been discussing, for instance, a not inconsiderable factor was Kennan's own political viewpoint—his distrust of popular government, his positive horror of the Congress, his macabre mental picture of a U.S. Senate intoxicated with the *hubris* that would surely have resulted from a successful policy of preventive show-down.

The Senatorial *hubris* would no doubt have been very awful indeed, but the American people had a moral right to be asked whether they would prefer the *hubris* of the Senate or the *hubris* of Nikita Khrushchev and Mao Tse-tung. Nor does it end there, either. Kennan's thoughts about this great choice, even if they were the right thoughts, would have been sharpened and clarified and amplified, if he had had to defend his position in the rough and tumble of national debate. Everyone's thoughts would have been sharpened and clarified and amplified. Even if the nation had finally concluded that Kennan's position was correct, the United States would then have gone forward with far more sureness, with far greater awareness of the dangers to avoid and the prices that must be paid, and therefore with a far better chance of making a success of Kennan's own policy.

Officials always tend to prefer secrecy about deep matters for just the same reasons that Mrs. Patrick Campbell preferred "the easy comfort of the marriage-bed to the hurly-burly of the *chaise longue*." For the short run, secrecy about deep matters is a great deal more easy and more comfortable for officials and politicians than the rough, rude, clangorous and erratic process of public debate. But nothing but public debate ensures the hard facts keeping their bite, and the choices being clearly outlined, and the grave situations being squarely faced. With no brisk winds of public opinion to blow the nonsense out of the window, the sacred governmental circle of those having "clearance" is always too airless. Its members too largely live and have their being in a private world; and their contacts with reality are not sufficient to encourage realistic thinking, even when they are very able men indeed.

IN THE American democracy, moreover, the reporter has a very much more important rôle than in other western democracies. No government in history, alas, has ever voluntarily told the whole truth, or anything like the whole truth, in its official statements, its approved discourses, and its organised press conferences. The whole truth is only revealed or approximated by long public debate; the realistic estimate is only reached after viewpoint has been tested against viewpoint, and all the facts, pro and con, have been weighed against each other. And in the United States, the debate about the nation's situation and the nation's policy is mainly carried on in the press (and of course in the other media of communication which still almost entirely reflect the press).

This is the most important point of difference, we sometimes suspect, between the American system and the British system. Under the British system, both executive and legislative responsibility are centred in the House of Commons. In Britain the men on the opposition front benches do not have executive responsibility now, but they at least had executive responsibility in the quite recent past. They too, therefore, have had to bear the burden of making great national decisions. They too have seen and weighed most of the relevant data that their successors now have before them. They too, in sum, know where the bodies are buried. So in Britain, for just these reasons, the national debate can be and actually is quite largely carried on in the House of Commons itself. The British press, therefore, has far less national responsibility than the American press. This difference perhaps explains why British popular newspapers make our most crime-filled tabloids seem serious and responsible, and why British serious newspapers are too often pretentious behind their fine, impressive, literate façades. (After watching the

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great *Times* cover the Korean war from New York, from the moment poor Ian Morrison was killed until the end, it has always been difficult for us to hold the *Times* in awe, especially since we have also observed the *Times* covering the worst of the Formosa crises from Singapore and the Indo-Chinese war from Paris. There are only two of us, but as we do not have the peculiar knack of super-telescopic vision, one of us was *there* when we published our accounts of these great events.)

IN THE United States, in contrast, the national debate cannot be and is not carried on within the government. The American Congress is constitutionally deprived of executive responsibility. No member of Congress, by virtue of his office, sees and weighs any large part of the data on which national decisions must be based. Almost no Senators or Representatives have the time left over from all their other duties to find out where the more important bodies are buried. Hence there has been only one real Congressional debate, absorbing the country's attention and fully ventilating a great national issue, in the whole quarter-century of the senior of these reporters' working life. That was the debate on Franklin Roosevelt's court bill. This issue, involving the actual balance of the governing branches, briefly transformed the Senate into a new constitutional convention. But nothing like this has happened since, and we shall probably go to our graves before Congress stages another true debate about a great issue.

There is also less and less open debate between the chief officials of the executive branch, who used to argue out their differences in public, but now do so no longer. (This we think an unhealthy trend.) Hence sheer force of circumstance has made the American press almost the only forum in which our national debate is carried on. The fact itself is little understood. The mode of the debate in the press is equally little understood. For it is not carried on by fusillades of opinion fired by editorial writers and columnists. It is mainly carried on in the news columns (or, as we hope, by columnists dealing in facts), by the publication and counter-publication of barrages of information on all sides of every major issue. The process is inchoate, formless, and undirected. But it is still the reporter's share in this process, his vital rôle in the national debate, that makes the reporter's trade more rewarding and exciting than the undertaker's.

THIS in turn determines the relationship between the reporter and the politician and/or official. We have acquired a reputation, in our opinion unjustified, for bringing a touch of arrogance to this relationship. A story is told about a meeting between the older member of our partnership and Admiral Lewis Strauss, just before the ineffable Admiral's appointment as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. The meeting ended when the reporter rose and remarked coldly, "Admiral, you have wasted half an hour of my time."

The story, as it happens, is quite true. The Admiral, not the reporter, had proposed the meeting. His only intention was to conciliate a newspaperman who might perhaps make trouble later on, by shedding the beams of his peculiar personality upon this potentially dangerous fellow. His notion, apparently, was that one ought to go away happy after such a pleasurable experience. As a flatterer, Strauss is an exceptional performer. But the reporter came to the meeting, not to be told he was a dear good fellow, but to discuss the profoundly significant public matters for which Strauss would soon have the highest responsibility. The reporter gradually discovered that Strauss had no intention whatever of discussing these matters. When the reporter discovered that Strauss did not wish to talk about serious matters, he considered that his time had been wasted, as indeed it had. He also considered, and still considers, that as a responsible newspaperman he had both a right and a duty to ask about key facts of the national situation. He further considered that he had been taken for a fool, as he had been. So he made the remark above-quoted, and departed forthwith.

If a reporter errs at all, it is better to err on the side of arrogance (or decent self-respect, as we should prefer to say) than to err on the side of meeching. It is mighty tempting for any reporter—a mere practitioner of a useful trade—to be pleased when he is figuratively patted on the head by public men in posts of great power and responsibility. It is even more tempting when the public man occasionally tosses a tit-bit of information between the head-pats, as you might give a spaniel an occasional biscuit.

The truth is that any good reporter must be prepared to lose a friend, at least for a while, if the friend is promoted to one of the principal public offices. When a man reaches the real heights—when he becomes Secretary of State, say, or Secretary of Defense, or Secretary of the Treasury—he becomes a chief actor in the public

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drama, always on the stage, always joining in the dialogue. Comment on his performance in turn becomes continuously necessary; and if the reporter's comment is honest, the public man will not always like it. All actors think the drama critics under-rate them, and sooner or later, all public men whose actions are continuously reported begin to think reporters misunderstand them. Sometimes the public man will have a good case because, in the nature of things, the reporter sometimes has to call the turn without all the essential facts in his possession. But if the reporter has done his utmost to find out all the facts, he must then call the turn as he sees it, without considering the consequences.

Within the limits of human fallibility, which are very wide indeed, we have tried to call the turn as we saw it, and we have lost eminent friends by doing so. Dean G. Acheson, for example, was another old tribal friend, born in the same town that our family comes from; and now that he is Secretary of State no longer, we like to think he has become our friend again. But he was not pleased by our reporting of his performance as a chief actor on the public stage, perhaps quite justifiably.

By the same token, we were on friendly terms with Louis A. Johnson when he became Secretary of Defense—to the extent, at least, one can be on friendly terms with a man one neither likes nor trusts. (This peculiar form of friendship, which we call business friendship, is widespread in Washington.) Johnson's performance as Under Secretary of War in Roosevelt's time had not been calculated to arouse admiration for his character. Yet he had at least fought against his Secretary, Harry Woodring, for a greater national defence effort when such an effort was desperately needed. A certain intimacy had grown up in this long past struggle. Johnson even gave us his private telephone number when he became Defense Secretary, which his predecessor, Jim Forrestal, had never given us. Johnson was also an accomplished practitioner of the trick some high officials have—the trick of keeping newspapermen sweet by giving them highly confidential and often damaging information about other high officials and departments other than their own—and we were among the first he tried the trick on. But we did not stay friends with Louis Johnson. No honest reporter could; the price was failing to report what Johnson was really doing to the defence of the United States.

So far as we have been able to count, we have been honoured with no less than six security investigations. Once, during the Truman administration, one of these so-called security investigations went so far that we received a long visit from two smooth, polite young gentlemen from the F.B.I. Once, during the Eisenhower administration, a remarkably crude and vulgar attempt to intimidate us was made by Attorney General Herbert Brownell. At a large party attended by several newspapermen, Brownell remarked, with careful casualness, that the Justice Department was examining our case with a view to prosecution on security grounds. He knew, of course, that the remark would be relayed to us within hours. He hoped, no doubt, that we would tremble and obey, at least to the extent of ceasing to print uncomfortably bad news.

Of course we were not impressed by Brownell's relayed threat. No reporter in his senses would be deterred by this sort of threat. In the first place, if a reporter has paid decent heed to the genuine requirements of national security—as we have always tried to do—he can be sure an American jury will not convict him for publishing the politically inconvenient truth. In the second place, all the security investigations to which we have been subjected started in mares' nests, with only one exception. The exception occurred when a very odd chapter of accidents put into our possession a fragment of the actual language of a cable from Ernest Bevin to Dean Acheson. Acheson was then boasting to Washington's always-echoing dinner parties that he had shut off all our sources of information, and we were pretty angry about it—quite justifiably, as we still think. So we published the quotation from Bevin's cable in a spirit of "Now we'll show him"—quite wrongly, as we now think. A reporter should not only refrain from examining any classified document, in the unlikely case that one is shown to him. He should also refrain from reproduction of the language of any such document, in the very rare cases like the one just cited, when the actual language may be repeated to him. If you do otherwise, you are trenching upon the necessary privacy of the policy-makers.

On the other hand, the two most intensive investigations that have been visited upon us were both the results of mares' nests of the most comic sort. The first, which culminated in the visit from the two young gentlemen from the F.B.I., was caused by a column we wrote in answer to

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one of Louis Johnson's more remarkable distillations of poisoned soothing syrup. Long after the evidence was in concerning the Soviet atomic tests in September, 1949, Johnson kept spreading the word that the Soviets probably did not have an atomic bomb after all; and Senator Owen Brewster finally echoed Johnson in a public speech. In answer, we printed the evidence that the Soviets quite certainly had a bomb—evidence which was common knowledge in the whole American scientific community. As it happened, President Truman himself was mulishly reluctant to believe the American atomic monopoly had been broken, because this event destroyed the sole excuse for the Truman-Johnson disarmament programme. Therefore (as we finally learned a full two years later) just the same evidence that appeared in our column had been assembled, in about the same way, in a paper intended to convince Truman; and this paper inevitably carried the topmost security classification. The wholly accidental similarities convinced the President that our column had been cribbed from his precious secret paper.

The other case was still more laughable. It happened after the intelligence had revealed the Soviet intention to launch an earth satellite, when the Eisenhower administration was convulsed with controversy about the desirability *vs.* the expense of an American satellite project. We dragged the controversy into the open. By so doing, in fact, we probably helped to force the eventual decision to go ahead with an American satellite—the decision which was then negated by Charles E. Wilson's pound-foolish penny-pinching. At any rate, the moment when President Eisenhower had to decide the issue was just at hand, when we published a column containing two imaginary headlines of the future—SOVIETS CLAIM SUCCESSFUL LAUNCHING OF EARTH SATELLITES and U.S. RADAR CONFIRMS EXISTENCE OF SOVIET SATELLITES. The column suggested what the event disastrously proved, that such headlines would be highly damaging to the U.S. world position, if we had not got there first with an American satellite. The partner who wrote the column had used the argument of the headlines in a dinner-table discussion of the issue a good many days earlier. A high official charged with studying the pros and cons of an American satellite was struck by what he heard. He used the remembered headlines almost verbatim, no doubt forgetting the source, in the N.S.C. paper he had to prepare (as we learned, as usual, about two years later). For once in a way, the President read his newspaper on the day our column was printed; and then, with an awful fatality, he read the N.S.C. paper. Perhaps rather naturally, he did not suspect that this was a case of an N.S.C. paper quoting the Alsops, rather than the reverse. The result was another fearful fit of Presidential temper, which produced another security investigation of extreme severity. The investigation never unravelled the mystery because, of course, security rules prevented anyone from telling us why on earth we were being investigated, or indeed, even officially admitting to us that an investigation was afoot.

SOMETIMES you have to call the turn in defiance of the judgment of men on the spot whom you know well and would normally trust. This happened to the elder member of our partnership when he reached Paris at Christmas time in the sad winter of Dien-Bien-Phu.

To be sure, he had seen what his friends among the American correspondents and the U.S. embassy officials in Paris had not seen. He had just passed a month in Saigon and at the front in Indo-China, and he had seen that the unending French effort against the Vietnamese Communists was nearing the exhaustion-point. He was privately convinced that the exhaustion-point would occur rather soon, unless the United States came to France's aid with men and ships and planes, as well as the money and material that were already being provided. No French politician in power had as yet even hinted at such a possibility, and all American observers in Paris believed that the French would stumble on indefinitely, without thought of giving up. There was a further complication, too. The State Department had virtually commanded our embassy in Saigon to emphasise the positive in all its reports. Hence the normally capable staff of the Paris embassy had been grossly misled about the gravity of the situation by reports from Saigon that were much too optimistic; and the embassy staff had in turn misled the resident American correspondents.

In these tangled and obfuscating circumstances, the then-Foreign Minister, Georges Bidault, sent for the reporter. Bidault spontaneously admitted, with great emphasis, that France would indeed have to abandon the Indo-Chinese struggle within a few months, unless the United States proved willing to intervene on the ground. When published, the interview with Bidault caused consternation in Washington. The Eisenhower administration had been com-

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placently relying on the French to protect South-East Asia against the inevitable consequences of our own acceptance of concealed defeat in Korea. Telegrams flew back and forth between Washington and Paris. Bidault had in fact used the reporter to tell the American government unofficially what he dared not say officially, because he was not ready to face the domestic political repercussions of an official communication. He now blandly explained that the whole trouble had arisen because of the reporter's bad French —which may not be very good, but was quite good enough to understand Bidault making the same flat, unadorned statement four times over. This explanation was primarily intended to protect Bidault from political attack at home. Meanwhile, Bidault of course expected the American authorities to question the reporter closely about what had passed during the interview, and to draw the necessary conclusions. No such enquiry was ever made. The Embassy in Paris accepted Bidault's explanation with happy relief.

When the reporter got back to Washington, he encountered many a smug, patronising smile and many a joke about his linguistic failings. It was no consolation, either, when the forecast of the Bidault interview was substantiated, in all its unhappy details, within the short, predicted space of three months.

To be sure, there are other Washingtons besides political Washington. There is business-Washington, a city we do not know at all, which probably resembles Cincinatti, Ohio. There is lobbyists'-Washington, a richly furnished vipers' nest. There is diplomats'-Washington, a ghastly community from which all able and sensible diplomats seek to escape into political Washington. But a Washington correspondent does not live in these other Washingtons. He lives in political Washington, which is a one-industry town. If he has any friends at all, most of them are bound to be men in government. And since life without friends is a pretty bleak business, the reporter must go to considerable pains to maintain a correct relation between his trade and his personal life.

Obviously, a reporter cannot make a practice of reporting after working hours. If he does so, he will soon achieve the approximate popularity of an insurance agent who takes along a bundle of contracts to every party he goes to. The rule is, however, that questions are only put in a man's office or at the luncheon table—the luncheon table being barbarously considered in Washington as a mere extension of the office.

In the Washington correspondent's life, hospitality is another problem that perhaps needs touching on. In political Washington you cannot just ask your close personal friends to your table. There is a strong touch of the zoo in Washington life, and everyone in Washington likes to see the lions, who also like to be seen. Washington dinner-giving is not quite so formula-ridden as it was in the old days before the war, when a prospective host or hostess would begin by asking, "Who shall I have for the Ambassador, who for the Supreme Court Justice, who for the Senator?" because one-of-each was a necessary ingredient in the recipe for a successful dinner. But even to-day, your dinner will please everyone more if there is a lion or two to roar away at the head of the table. Even your closest friends will be a little disappointed without lions. And it is also useful to a reporter to feed the lions, if they will consent to be fed.

On the other hand, the purpose of feeding the lions is not the purpose that is widely suspected. One of us well remembers asking to dinner a man who now holds a key ambassadorial post, and stands very high on the list of John Foster Dulles' bad jokes on the American people. He refused dinner but asked if he could come in afterwards. In due course he appeared; but he drank only soda water, hardly said more than "good evening" and "good-bye," and from time to time was visibly shaken by an inner paroxysm of unexplained alarm. The reporter learned later that his guest, who is a very fearful man, had feared that evening being overloaded with wines and liquors, and then persuaded to say much he should not have said. But you do not ask lions to feed with you in order to ply them with intoxicants and then with questions. Aside from wanting to make up the kind of Washington party that gives pleasure, you ask lions as well as closer friends because you want to know what sort of men they are, which is best discovered out of office hours.

But this examination of the big and little personal problems and the working methods and the public function of a reporter in Washington has run on long enough. At bottom it is intended as an answer to the leading American expert on the Soviet Union who is now, when his *expertise* is so badly needed, rather oddly assigned to the American Embassy

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in Manila. Charles E. Bohlen, who wisely guided many newspapermen when he was charged with this duty by the State Department, none the less has always contended that "officials and reporters are natural enemies, because the reporter always wants just what the official should not give him."

We think, on the contrary, that the reporter and the man in government are natural allies; since it is the reporter's business to portray the national situation to the people, and since the man in government cannot do what needs doing unless the people understand the national situation. It is not always an easy alliance, for obvious reasons. But in our experience, the alliance has always existed and has always functioned well, whenever the government has been strong and clear of purpose. When the government wishes to respond to the hard challenges of these difficult times, and when the government knows its own mind about the appropriate responses, then the government is only too eager to tell the people just how matters stand. It is necessary to do so, or public opinion will not support the efforts and risks required to meet the challenges. In these periods of strong, clear-purposed government, the responsible reporter's life in Washington is immensely exciting and immensely satisfying. It becomes less pleasant when a weak government does not know what to do, and so wishes to conceal from the nation the need to do anything. Then the government's aim is to hide the challenges, so that there will be no call for any response; the government's hope is to paint the national situation in false colours, so that there will be no disquiet about it. In such times as these, the reporter must fight hard to perform his public function, and in such times as these there may indeed be real enmity between many time-serving officials and reporters who will not agree to print the prevailing official falsehoods. But although this recurring situation is neither easy nor agreeable, the reporter at least has one compensation. When the government is not telling the truth to the people, the reporter's truth-telling becomes immeasurably more important.

Both constitute the essential reportorial situation—truth-telling with strong government and truth-telling despite weak government.

Frances Cornford

The Past

Astonishment is on me unaware
At the absolute sameness of sun on altering hair,
At spring's identical embroidered riches,
At the same stitchwort flowering in hot ditches,
At cowslips clustered, smelling humbly sweet
Still with their round pale stalks which are good to eat,
Though now a child who closely knew these things
Is lost along a corridor of springs.

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MUSIC

Ending the Great Tradition

A Modest Proposal — By VIRGIL THOMSON

TRADITION and change, as words, are so heavily weighted with hopes and fears that it is virtually impossible to describe with them convincingly any moment of time in music's history. Nevertheless, there have been periods so tranquil that one is tempted to believe no major change was taking place, while during others the evolutionary process was so rapid that to the casual-minded change, rather than tradition, might well seem to have been in the saddle.

Take the European 19th century, for instance, after the death of Beethoven. The transformation of musical techniques and expression through Weber, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Schumann, Berlioz, Wagner, Verdi, Moussorgsky, Franck, and Debussy, was constant and continuous. At the same time, tradition—the Beethoven tradition—was the basis of musical pedagogy. And none of these composers, not even Debussy (though he complained a little about Beethoven), dreamed of dethroning him as the sun-king. On the contrary, they all aspired to add something, to contribute to the tradition that had arrived through Beethoven at so splendid and so manly a maturity.

Naturally there were both radical and conservative temperaments around; there always are. Wagner publicised his own music as "the music of the future," implying by this slogan that everybody else's was out of date. And Brahms (with his own consent) was announced by Hanslick as the defender of the classical tradition against Wagner's irresponsible practices. But both Wagner and Brahms were clearly out for inheriting Beethoven's prestige. A century later, it looks as if both were wrong about themselves too. Wagner's music had its biggest "future" (as measured from his posthumous performances by Dr. John H. Mueller, of Indiana University) between 1890 and 1910. Since the latter date his popularity has declined steadily, and by seventy-five per cent. His orchestration procedures, however, his chromatic harmony, his German declamation, and his symphonico-dramatic textures are still studied in *conservatoires*. Brahms, on the other hand, though he has never become a major model for pedagogy (being in every musical skill largely a reflection of Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven), has nevertheless enjoyed ever since his death in 1897 a rising incidence of performance. So that to-day (and this is the joke on Wagner) Brahms ranks at the box-office second only to Beethoven himself.

There is really no equating the "radical" with the "progressive" and the "conservative" with the "reactionary." Saint-Saëns, a conservative type himself, strengthened French music by introducing from Germany the use of sonata form, whereas Richard Strauss, for all his apparent radicalism of style and subject, added very little that is usable to-day either to the German tradition or to modernism in general. All that one can be sure of, between 1826 and 1914, is that change was rapid and that tradition—the classical tradition of Haydn and Mozart and Beethoven—was firmly respected everywhere. Both tradition and change, indeed, were so strongly entrenched that their representatives could afford *not* to co-operate. And this is how our century came to assume that the musical tradition creates by its own nature, allows for and lives in, a climate of constant variation in no way destructive to the noble mountains of the past or erosive to the fertile valleys of the present. The truth of this belief is not demonstrable. But its widespread acceptance in our time has assured modern music a hearing and has tended, moreover, to associate the sacred concept "progressive" with any music that bears any aspect of technical novelty.

THE fifty years that ended with Beethoven's death were probably the first period in Western music's whole history that produced a body of work clearly visible to the immediate heirs of it as a classical repertory. Music, for the first time ever, had become a major art. And if in the century succeeding, German music followed a normal pattern of decay through giganticism, loss of muscular tone, and general decalcification, Italy nevertheless enjoyed from Rossini through Puccini a rejuvenation of the opera; in Russia secular music was born and came to a striking maturity; and France, from Berlioz through Debussy, experienced a miracle. Germany herself, in her luxuriant decline, gave us the orchids of Strauss and Schoenberg. At the

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same time, Brazil, Spain, Bohemia, Scandinavia, Hungary, and North America, began sending up shoots. It was a brilliant century, full of change and excitement, and everywhere solidly nourished on the masters. Creation has rarely been more active, pedagogy more powerful.

The speed of evolution accelerated and the excitement of it all mounted till about 1914. Debussy, who had already given his major piano works, as well as his opera *Pelléas et Mélisande* and his symphonic poem *La Mer*, composed in 1913 his ballet *Jeux* and shortly after his three *Sonates*. Indeed, the five years preceding World War I brought with them, like a last wave breaking on the Western beach, Stravinsky's *Firebird*, *Petrouchka*, and *The Rite of Spring*; Schoenberg's completed *Gurrelieder*, *Five Orchestral Pieces*, and *Pierrot Lunaire*; Ravel's *Schéhérazade*, *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*, and *Daphnis et Chloë*. Every one of these works was striking, original, and powerful in expression. Every one of them, moreover, brought to maturity some composing technique predictable from the classical syntax.

Debussy's novel achievements were full freedom of form (essayed at the end of his life by Beethoven himself); verbal-musical amalgams more electric than those of Bach, Rameau, Mozart, Rossini, or even Schubert; and (shared with Schoenberg and Stravinsky) a consistent one-hundred-per-cent dissonance saturation to delight the ears of Bach, who had so often provoked that experience mechanically through the use of organ mixture-stops. Further achievements of the time included Stravinsky's raising of rhythm to the rank of a major component in composition (and how Beethoven would have envied that!); Schoenberg's heightening of chromaticism to the confounding of all tonality (Mozart surely would have adopted this for use in the theatre); outlandish and wonderful loudnesses (perhaps not so novel as they may have seemed, but always, as experience, a delight); and a pulverisation of musical sound to the ultimate of delicacy (begun in Debussy's late sonatas, later carried on in the music of Anton Webern) like a fine gold dust hanging in air.

All these achievements completed and crowned the classical repertory without in any way invalidating it. Indeed, it looks now as if Western music—that vast development which began with early Christian psalmody, which invented and perfected, one by one, the Gregorian chant, counterpoint, multiple metrics, harmony, a dozen wind and string instruments, the simultaneous differentiated employment of all these in the lyric drama, the oratorio, the choreographico-musical narrative, and the extended instrumental forms (which it also invented)—had come to term. With the classical symphonists, the Western musical language was mature; in the work of the classical modernists it became free. And this last result, like all the others, was produced by classically-trained musicians working within the framework of the classical tradition.

THAT tradition remains still unshaken. Indeed it has lately been further buttressed by musicological studies. Nor have the contributions of modernism been discarded; they have become, indeed, a part of our classical tradition. Nevertheless, music's rate of evolution has slowed down so noticeably since World War I that it might easily be doubted whether there has been any forward movement at all of late. Of really powerful works produced in the last forty years I can name you only five: Igor Stravinsky's *L'Histoire d'un Soldat*, Erik Satie's *Socrate*, Honegger's *Pacific 231*, Darius Milhaud's *La Création du Monde*, and Alan Berg's *Wozzeck*; and these were all written before 1926. I know nothing of comparable originality composed since then, except possibly some very short pieces by Anton Webern.

To-day there is little active change going on. There is only tradition, and that tradition includes all the modernisms of yesteryear. The modernist branch of our tradition, now wholly official and more than a little pompous, possesses (as our tradition has always done) a diatonic and a chromatic style. Our century's diatonic style, commonly referred to as "neo-classicism," is an eclectic mixture of pre-World War I liberties with earlier, tighter syntaxes. Its practitioners dominate pedagogy, publishing, and performance. Twentieth-century chromaticism, as simplified about 1926 by Schoenberg into a rule-of-thumb known as serial dodecaphony (or the 12-tone-row technique), marks the music of a smaller group that essays through a publicity at once pious and pugnacious to seize the positions of power now held by the neo-classic representatives. In neither camp is there much novelty of expression or method; in both, rather, there is a sectarian adherence to certain parts of the great tradition, as if all of it were too much for anybody to live with.

THERE are those who maintain that the Western musical language, now being complete, must be scrapped. This is to argue that the English language, once it came to maturity in the plays of Shakespeare and in the King James Bible, was thenceforth useless to literature. (Or that French, after its grammar had been stabilised by La Fontaine, Molière, and Racine, ceased to serve civilisation well.) The contrary, of course, is true. And though any of civilisation's instruments may slowly decline in vigour

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after its first maturity, that decline is likely to be accompanied by a wider and wider utilisation over many centuries. Dozens of our major tools, indeed, no longer evolve at all in any essential way—bread, for instance, pie-crust, fish-nets, the wheelbarrow, the violin.

Music as a language, though long may it live, will not, I fear, be evolving much more. There will not be another Beethoven; of course there will not. Nor a Bach nor a Mozart nor even a Debussy. They are as inconceivable as another Shakespeare, because our musical language is complete and its gamut explored. We can only codify it now, and use it in the living we are doing. At the very least we can export it to Asia and Africa. We can also finish off at home some jobs worth doing and long put off. A conquest of the English language by opera is possibly (at this moment) imminent. The vast and fertile field of Spanish declamation has barely been touched. The continental opera itself awaits for its revival the perfection of a new recitative, viable for films and television. In general, for the West, constructive advance seems more urgent on the vocal than on the instrumental front. But there is still room, if not for much definitive change, for movement in every direction.

THE directions most encouraged to-day in Europe are rhythmic research and integral serialism. The former stems from American sources (Henry Cowell, Edgar Varèse, John Cage) and from the pre-1914 Stravinsky. Its purest form (also mostly from America) is that of music for non-tonal percussion instruments. The combination of rhythmic research with twelve-tone chromaticism has produced in Europe a twelve-tone music in which not only the tones themselves but also durations, pauses, loudnesses, instrumental colours, high and low pitches, methods of attack and release, every variable in music, in fact, is subjected to a systematic organisation into ordered series. Complete organisation of this kind is known as *sérialisme intégral*; and its more celebrated practitioners are Pierre Boulez in France, Karlheinz Stockhausen in Germany, and Luigi Nono (Arnold Schoenberg's son-in-law) in Italy.

I find this music utterly charming in sound and refreshingly innocent in expression. There is nothing wrong with it except the publicity advanced in its favour that it is another "music of the future" and consequently abolishes, save for museum purposes, all other music. This pretension is absurd because the idiom is not that novel; it is still a dialect of Bach and completely comprehensible to any classical musician. It is a game (one might almost say a children's game) played with classical elements, and less a pioneering adventure than one in which all the still-open roadways, one by one, get closed off to traffic.

I doubt seriously whether there are unexploited devices available, enough ungerminated seed lying around, for starting a radically new musical tradition. I do believe, however, that success will not wholly pass by the rhythmic experimenters and the one-hundred-per-cent serialists. I can imagine them making lovely scores for all the better films about space-travel, where their invigorating metrical asymmetries and their antiseptic and up-to-date sounds will give an effect ever so much more appropriate than pathos. If this happens, they will have contributed to the still-living tradition of musical impressionism; that is to say, of atmospheric evocation. And we shall all be very happy, for they are loyal workmen and their music unquestionably has charm. My only dispute with these excellent friends and colleagues is that I simply cannot see them as subversive. I can just barely see them as late contributors to traditional modernism. And I must admit that they present themselves at modern music's door with the standard offering, however small, of innovation.

NOW "modernism" in music, to begin retracing my argument, is a concept from the late 19th century that urges an attitude of receptivity towards anything that may seem "progressive," either in syntax or in subject-matter. It is an "open-door" policy regarding change, and the official representatives of tradition itself have not always been unfriendly towards it. In any case, modernism long ago won so many of its battles with reaction, and won them so decisively, that by the end of World War I they were sharing condominium in the *conservatoires*.

Little by little, however, as the supply of musical novelty diminished, the encouragement of novelty was transformed from an open-door policy into a doctrinaire position. This position, as upheld in the magazines of musical modernism and in the programmes of the contemporary music concerts, maintained that there could be no authentic or valuable composition that did not embody some technical novelty; the corollary being, of course, that any work which *did* embody a technical novelty, however small, was more valuable than one which did not.

To realise the absurdity of this position one has only to remember that music's master-builders, Bach and Mozart and Beethoven (and even Wagner), were none of them research men. Awareness of this fact, as well as the increasing scarcity of novel devices, turned the young musicians of the post-World War I generation towards an exploitation of established modernism

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through the mass media—that is to say, through radio, films, and dance spectacles, and through oratorio-like *grandes machines* designed to divert a mass public by the mobilisation of orchestras, soloists, choruses, and that most anti-musical of all instruments, the speaking voice. These efforts have not produced masterpieces. But they have popularised, officialised, and standardised the modern vocabulary so effectively that it is very hard to-day to distinguish by the ear alone the work of one contemporary composer from that of another.

I do not wish to imply that no musical research to-day is valid and no expression authentic. But I do consider that both technical advance and expressivity have shown, since World War I (or at least since 1925), a decline in vigour. A parallel situation, indeed, exists in both painting and poetry. We are living in a time of cultural recession. Politics, economic organisation, and the arts of war appear to be on the move. The fine and applied arts, in this epoch of wide cultural distribution, are definitely conservative. This conservatism, at least in music and in painting, is based on a tradition of modernism once radical, now completely academic and official.

The modernist musical tradition has never denied its derivation from Beethoven and Bach. The classics of yesteryear are no less classical to-day. It is also clear, however, that musical evolution, which has been extremely active for two centuries, has for the time being lost its dynamism. The situation is no doubt temporary. I cannot imagine music's remaining for long as inactive as it seems to be right now. All the arts, as I have suggested, are in a low part of their curve, possibly because the world is up to something else. And one of the things it is up to is distributing its cultural produce to a world-wide market. It is enlarging and standardising that market with a remarkable energy. And it has been possible to undertake such a standardisation because we, the musicians, had already standardised, brought to completion, and officialised our whole tradition classical and modern. The distributors, at this point, have every right to take over.

SO WHAT do we do now, we composers? There is only one thing possible: to change the assumptions on which we operate. We shall have to forget for a time about novelty and change and tradition and all such great big wordy ideas. I propose to you that every composer has plenty of small ideas, technical and expressive ones, and that these ideas are all valid if sincerely and competently acted upon. It is better to work with the ideas one really has, however small they may seem, than to try to follow an outworn line of modernism-at-any-price. Especially in a time when there are so few "modernistic" ideas available at any price. In other words, *the tradition of constant change* must be thrown overboard and freshness found through other preoccupations.

The standardisation of compositional procedures is a fact; we cannot fight that. Anyway, we have produced it ourselves both knowingly and inevitably, through the intense and highly intellectual organisation, over centuries, of our whole musical tradition, creative and executional. The standardisation of audiences is also a fact; and though composers have contributed towards bringing it about, we are not wholly happy with the result. It is better for business distribution than for creative advance. Our dilemma is that we believe in creative advance but are unable to make very much of it right now through technical innovation. Moreover, we are suspicious, as a source of inspiration, of *mere* expressivity; in our unconscious it lies uncomfortably close to commercial motivations and the relaxing of standards. The same is true for the tricky concept of "sincerity."

All the same, we may well be reduced to seeking innovation through expressivity, instead of expressivity through innovation, and to finding expressivity through sincerity (though sincerity, at its purest, leads straight to anarchy and through anarchy to the destruction of both tradition and progress). Indeed, regarding musical composition, it is my belief that as of to-day only sincerity and anarchy are valid. There is no "good" line or "bad" line, nothing clearly "progressive" or "reactionary." We are no longer fighting from fixed positions, nor even amongst ourselves. We are fighting individually against the distributors and against the standardisers. We are fighting for our professional lives and for music's life. All this vast distribution by gramophone and radio, this amplified inundation of the world with sure-fire classics and banal modernities, can kill the art of music, plain wear it out. But till the sad day comes when nobody educated would be caught dead listening to music, it may just be possible to follow for a while the best lesson in the whole classical tradition—which is that individual initiative is honourable—and to succeed, with luck, by private pushes and private tinkerings at keeping the giant musical machine in some kind of motion. It will require, of course, the private efforts of a great many people all over the world, many of them working underground lest they be denounced, to counteract music's present incipient sclerosis. And the time may be short. But I, for one, should hate to see the day when there will be music music everywhere—and no surprise or spontaneity in any of it.

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NOTES & TOPICS

G. E. Moore

"I HAVE known most of the distinguished men of my time," Mrs. Sidney Webb once said to me, "but I have never yet met a great man." I had admiration and affection for Beatrice Webb, but when she pronounced one of these Sinaic judgments in her tenebrous Grosvenor Road dining-room, gazing through the window across the river at the Doulton China Works, I used to feel that in one moment I should be submerged in despair and desolation, that I was a miserable fly crawling painfully up the Webbs' window swotted long before I reached the top by their merciless common-sense. But sometimes the fly gave a dying kick, and on this occasion I said: "I suppose you don't know G. E. Moore." No, she said, she did not know G. E. Moore, though she knew, of course, whom I meant, and the question of human greatness having been settled, we passed to another subject.

That conversation took place about forty years ago, but I still think that I was right, that George Moore [who died in London on October 24th, 1958, at the age of eighty-one years] was a great man, the only great man whom I have ever met or known in real life. There was in Moore an element which can, I think, be accurately called greatness, a combination of mind and character and behaviour, of thought and feeling, which made him qualitatively different from anyone I have ever known and which I recognise in only one or two of the famous dead men whom no doubt quite rightly we are enjoined to praise for various reasons.

I went up to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1899, and it was, I suppose, in 1902 that I got to know him well. He was seven years my senior and a Fellow of Trinity. His mind was an extraordinarily powerful instrument; it was Socratic, analytic. But unlike so many analytic philosophers or those whose minds delight in the minutest logic- or truth-chopping, he never analysed just for the sake of analysis. He had a passion for truth, but not for all or any truth, never for truth "dead from the waist down"—only for important truths. In 1902, among the Fellows of Trinity were three philosophers: A. N. Whitehead, Bertrand Russell, and G. E. Moore. Whitehead was forty-one years old, Russell thirty, and Moore twenty-nine. It is a remarkable fact—a superb example of our inflexible irrationality and inconsistency—that, although no people has ever despised and distrusted the intellect and intellectuals more than the British, these three philosophers were each awarded the highest and rarest of honours, the Order of Merit. 1903 was an *annus mirabilis* for Cambridge philosophy, for in that year Russell published his *Principles of Mathematics* and Moore his *Principia Ethica*. Russell used to come to Moore's rooms sometimes in order to discuss some difficult problem which was holding him up. The contrast between the two men and the two minds was astonishing and delightful. Russell has the quickest mind of anyone I have ever known; like the greatest of chess players he sees in a flash ten moves ahead of the ordinary player and one move ahead of all the other Grand Masters. Even when he is most serious, wit and a kind of puckish humour flicker through his thought, and, like most people who possess this kind of mental brilliance, in an argument he is sometimes not entirely scrupulous in taking advantage of his superior skill in the use of weapons. Moore was the exact opposite, and to listen to an argument between the two was like watching a race between the hare and the tortoise. The tortoise quite often won—which, of course, was the reason why Russell's thought had been so deeply influenced by Moore and why he still came to Moore's rooms to discuss difficult problems.

Moore was not witty; there was no flash or scintillation in his thought or conversation. But he had an extraordinary profundity and clarity of thought, and he used these gifts with terrific tenacity and integrity in the pursuit of truth. And he had two other very rare characteristics. He had a genius for seeing, both in thought and in life and in persons, what was important and what unimportant and irrelevant, and in the most complicated argument or situation he pursued the relevant and ignored the irrelevant with incredible tenacity. He was able to do so because of the passion for truth (and, as I shall show, for other things) which burned in him. It was this combination of clarity, integrity, tenacity, and passion which made the tortoise so often win the race.

The intensity of his passion for truth was an integral part of his greatness. But purity of passion was an integral part of his whole character. On the surface and until you got to know him intimately he was a very shy, reserved man. On all occasions and in any company he might fall into profound and protracted silence. The reserve and the silence covered deep feeling. When Moore said: "I *simply* don't understand *what* he means," the emphasis on the "simply" and the "what" and the shake of his head over

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each word gave one a glimpse of the passionate distress which muddled thought roused in him. I used to play fives with him in Cambridge; he played the game with the same passion as that with which he pursued truth; after few minutes in the court the sweat poured down his face in streams and soaked his clothes—it was excitement as well as exercise. He played the piano and sang, often to Lytton Strachey and me in his rooms and on reading parties in Cornwall. He was not a highly skilful pianist or singer, but I have never been given greater pleasure from playing or singing. This was partly due to the intelligence of his understanding and partly to the subtlety and intensity of his feeling. He played the Waldstein sonata or sang *"Ich grolle nicht"* with the same passion with which he pursued truth; when the last note died away, he would sit absolutely still, his hands resting on the keys, and the sweat streaming down his face.

I said above that Moore's mind was Socratic. I think that his character, too, and his influence upon us at Cambridge were Socratic. It is clear from Plato and Xenophon that the curious simplicity and integrity of Socrates were enormously attractive to the young men who became his disciples. He inspired great affection as well as admiration. So did Moore. Plato in the *Symposium* shows us a kind of cosmic absurdity in the monumental simplicity of Socrates; such different people as Alcibiades, Aristophanes, and Agathon "rag" him about it and laugh at him gently and affectionately. There was the same kind of divine absurdity in Moore. He had not Socrates' advantage—which the Greeks of the 5th century B.C. naturally appreciated—of combining a very ugly face with a very beautiful soul. When I first knew him, his face was amazingly beautiful, almost ethereal. But he possessed that profound simplicity which Tolstoy and other Russian writers consider produces the finest human beings. They are "simples" or "sillies" and absurd in ordinary life and by the standards of sensible and practical men. There is a wonderful description of a "silly" in Tolstoy's autobiography and of course in Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*. In many ways Moore was one of these "sillies." Bertrand Russell has described with what pleasure one used to watch Moore trying unsuccessfully to light his pipe when he was arguing an important point. He would light a match, hold it over the bowl of his pipe, until it burnt his fingers and he had to throw it away, and go on doing this—talking the whole time—until the whole box of matches was exhausted. This single-minded simplicity permeated his life, and the absurdity which it often engendered in ordinary life added to one's admiration and affection for him. Like Socrates, he attracted a number of friends and followers as different from one another as Plato and Aristophanes were from Alcibiades and Xenophon. They ranged from Desmond MacCarthy and Lytton Strachey to Sir Ralph Wedgwood and Eddie (Sir Edward) Marsh, Winston Churchill's private secretary. Everyone enjoyed Moore's absurdities and laughing at them and he enjoyed it too. For although he was not himself actively witty or humorous, he had a great sense of humour. Lytton Strachey's witticisms in conversation greatly amused him, but the wit and humour which he liked best was, I think, Desmond MacCarthy's. Desmond was a brilliant talker and raconteur and he could make Moore laugh as no one else could. And Moore laughed, when he did laugh, with the same passion with which he pursued truth or played a Beethoven sonata. A frequent scene which I like to look back upon is Desmond standing in front of a fire-place telling a long, fantastic story in his gentle voice and Moore lying back on a sofa, his pipe as usual out, shaking from head to foot in a long paroxysm of laughter.

Leonard Woolf

Ancient Greek and Festival English

THE cinema keeps its vitality on one condition: that you don't try to import into it ready-made cultural attitudes. It has, of course, built up a whole armoury of clichés of its own, but clichés from outside it rejects at once. The reason why Shakespeare films are, to people who like the cinema, usually very boring, is not merely that there are so many words, so many beautiful words, but that the moment you say "Shakespeare" a whole complex of cultural attitudes swings into play. Rather the same thing has happened with *The Immortal Land*, Basil Wright's documentary about Greece (now running at the Academy in London). It has taken one of the most momentous of all ideas—the idea of Greece—and let it impose its own terms. The result is a piece of prolonged cultural attitudinising.

The Immortal Land is dedicated to a single proposition: that Greek past and present are so closely related that they can be conjugated as a single tense. This in itself is unexceptionable. A romantic feeling for the continuity of Greek life dates back to the 18th century, and topographical sentiment about the soil of Greece is older than Cicero. But "continuity," if it is to be more than

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a rhetorical indulgence, must be made to mean something precise. The continuity of the Greek language—the true Greek language, not just the pretentious *katharevousa*—is a matter not of sentiment but of philology: it is possible to show an unbroken development from classical Attic to the speech of contemporary Athens. And even that great and seemingly most unhellenic instrument of conservation, the Orthodox Church, can be seen as a hellenistic institution and thus as a link with antiquity.

But the "continuity" of a good deal of popular philhellenism is a different matter, and it is in this sort of continuity that *The Immortal Land* deals. A conventionally selective picture of the Greek present is equated with a mistily-focused evocation of the Greek past. The short tour of modern Athens which follows the preliminary shots of the Parthenon makes not too obliquely a set of not too unfamiliar points. A crowded street-scene provokes a comment on the "timeless bustle" of Athenian life. A flower-seller smiles as he arranges his wares—and gloomily we remind ourselves that they are so *artistic* in the Mediterranean. People gossip on street corners or lounge at cafés—they *know how to enjoy life* out there, of course, they *seem to have so much more time than we do*. But even filtered like this, modern city life presents difficulties and for the rest of the film we deal in shepherds and such.

Once out in the fields the narration, written by Rex Warner and spoken by Leo Genn, spares no efforts to show the identity of past and present. The screen offers us a cobbler, going about his business much as cobblers do in Tooting or Boston, Mass. "In what age, past, present, or future," Genn intones hoarsely, "shall we place the cobbler's work?" A shepherd skips along briskly beside his sheep, and at once an immemorial past is invoked to explain his behaviour. "All his movements are directed to an end"—they would be, unless he were spastic—"but in themselves they decorate the landscape." "Holy islands brooding in a divine calm"—Genn's voice savours the rich travel-agency prose voluptuously—"islands fragrant with lemon and aromatic herbs." Great use is made of that travelogue stand-by, the fact that somewhere where something notable once happened people are *still* doing something or other. It is hideously familiar in the travel literature of Italy. "Snowy oxen still drag their laden carts along paths St. Francis (Giotto/Machiavelli) trod seven (six/five) hundred years ago." Mr. Warner is finer. "Near ruined walls from which a king set out for Troy"—I quote from memory—"men still cultivate the ancient earth." But, after all, why shouldn't they? Agamemnon notwithstanding, they have to use something for food. A shot of a steamer leaving the Piraeus, accompanied by Michael Redgrave, voice broken with emotion, reading a passage from Thucydides' description of the Sicilian Expedition is perhaps the film's silliest moment, and the completest demonstration of Mr. Warner's unconcern with the business of marrying word and image.

The language of the narration is what Desmond Fitzgerald once called "Festival English." In FE, a fatty degeneration of the degenerate dialect of Lamb, you say *endure for long* when you mean "to last," *no little* instead of "some," *to fashion* instead of "to make." It is essentially the language of salesmanship: it sells beer at home and Britain abroad. Its typical use is to persuade American visitors that English life is one long mad round of beef-eaters, hedgerows, and cottage industries. (FE has its visual equivalent in the famous Travel Association poster of peasants in smocks.)

I think it was a correct literary decision of Mr. Warner's to cast his narration into this style. For the attitude to Greece which he is trying to put over is as unconvincing as the attitude to England which Festival English is designed to promote. In spite of all its concern with the past, *The Immortal Land* shows so little sense of any real Greek past that the concept of continuity lacks both force and meaning. One accepts that this interpretation of continuity involves skipping most of recorded Greek history—the trifling Byzantine interlude, the fact that modern Greece is a creation of the Orthodox Church, was represented, characteristically, by the *ruins* of Mistra. But at least Messrs. Wright and Warner could have suggested, if only in the interests of gaiety, that Greece was at some time inhabited by human beings—people who lived in city states, held differing views about most of the things that still interest intelligent people, owned rather disagreeable silver mines, and so on. Nobody wants Greece debunked, but why try to revive an attitude to the classics that is half-a-century out of date? In spirit this film belongs to an earlier generation of Hellenists—"impresarios of the ancient Greeks," in MacNeice's phrase. The tone of modern classical scholarship is far sharper, far less emotional, and indeed one of its main tasks is to scrape the bright image of Greece clean of the accretions with which a sentimental Hellenism overlaid it. But one searches in vain for any sharpness of focus in *The Immortal Land*. This is the 19th-century Glory that was Greece reduced to the level of a private phantasy.

Significantly, one of the film's better moments is the scene in a taverna when Leo Genn's unctuous tones give way to the words of a real live Greek. Minos Volanakis, naturally enough, was not overcome with emotion at the sight of his countrymen singing and drinking wine, nor

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did he find in their behaviour any direct reference to antiquity. Here was a nice party of Greeks enjoying themselves, making a spot of baldoria as they say across the Adriatic, and that, mercifully, was all. (Incidentally, why was more use not made of Greek music? The Royal-Occasion score was so nobly, vaguely generalised that it merely succeeded in laying a pall of respectful depression over the proceedings.)

Less clear of pretension, but still on a higher level than the rest of the film, was the passage introduced by George Seferis' superb domed head. Gielgud's reading of his verse was rather too churchy and the statuary sequence, for which Michael Ayrton was apparently responsible, need not have confined itself so much to anthology pieces. Nonetheless, there was at last some pressure of feeling and intelligence behind the words and one found oneself watching the camera's activities with a certain interest, even if one didn't agree that Greek sculptures should be made to *move* in so melodramatic a fashion. Elsewhere, the camera work matched the narration all too faithfully. The film was visually often "beautiful," but only in the sense that a succession of Greek lantern slides can be beautiful. In the cinema's terms, surely we deserved something better than this reverent, evenly-paced panning from sacred object to sacred object?

As documentary, this expensive loving film is entirely retrograde, a decadent incident in the long British affair with Greece.

D. S. Carne-Ross

Mauriac, the Witness

WE HAVE no major intellectual nagger in England at the moment, no great master of words to keep flaying the hide off convention, in the manner of Shaw, Wells, and Orwell. The Angry Young Men, in so far as they exist, have proved to be merely irritable and personal. I had great hopes once of Priestley and Muggeridge, particularly of Muggeridge, but both have misfired up to now, I don't quite know why. What we need is some firmly-based, intelligent man with a gift of satirical phrase, who could think in public once a week and keep us stupider, more complacent, people on the hop.

In France, François Mauriac has fulfilled this requirement in his own particular way, ever since the end of the war. Whatever reservations one may wish to make about his quality as a creative artist or about his depth as a thinker, it must be agreed that he has been a very effective thorn in the side of the French bourgeoisie. Sartre has done a lot of theorising about *engagement* and is undoubtedly a much bigger brain, but his polemical writing is always too complicated and diffuse. Camus has retreated into a noble silence. In the fitful apostolic succession of the great dissident Intellectual Witness, the mantle of François the First, Marie Arouet de Voltaire, the scourge of the Church—after gracing in turn the shoulders of Émile Zola, Anatole France, and André Gide—has fallen on François the Second, the Catholic novelist, whose pronouncements of the last five years are contained in his recently-published *Bloc-Notes* (Flammarion, Paris).

Theologically, I think, Mauriac is on the Left, and politically on the intelligent Right. He began his post-war journalistic phase by contributing leaders to the Conservative *Figaro*; then he helped to found the Catholic monthly, *La Table Ronde*, and published a regular diary in that; when the atmosphere there began to prove uncongenial, he moved to *L'Express*, the *mendésiste* weekly run by J.-J. Servan-Schreiber and Françoise Giroud. This paper has nothing Catholic about it. Its tone is secular, intelligent, managerial, sophisticated. It calls itself *Le Journal de la Nouvelle Vague*, that is, the paper of the new generation created by the rapidly rising birth-rate, who are eager to modernise the country and shake off the trammels of recent history. Although *mendésiste*, it has no strict party alignment. It combines fervent patriotism with the condemnation of colonialism, and a genuine interest in the working-class with a bourgeois ethos. On particular issues it may take its stand to the Left of the Socialists, but in its household hints it tends to assume that electric mixers and fitted carpets are within the reach of all, and will refer to a £20 or £30 coat as *"un petit manteau pas cher."* Mauriac, now seventy-three, is the elderly *enfant terrible* of this young paper. He has the back page to himself; there he lambasts the politicians, needles away at his literary colleagues, occasionally introduces a spiritual note, and sometimes—as during the recent de Gaulle crisis, disagrees with the general attitude of the rest of the paper.

Understandably, Mauriac and *L'Express* are attacked from both Right and Left. The Algerian *colons*, who have threatened to assassinate Servan-Schreiber and beat up Mauriac, look upon them as traitors to their country and their class. The Left-Wing sees them as enlightened capitalists, whose hearts may be in the right place but who have no organised doctrine and are obviously not going to saw off the branch they are sitting on. Mauriac, in particular, has often been accused

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of enjoying the best of all worlds. It is true that he shares the privileges of wealth, being a member of a wine-growing, Bordeaux family. He has a large country house, Malagar, where he has often been photographed and which figures prominently in *Bloc-Notes*. His literary career has been one of unbroken success; he was elected to the French Academy before he was fifty, and in 1952 he received the Nobel Prize. In November 1958, General de Gaulle awarded him the *Grand-Croix de la Légion d'honneur*. His diary records his movements between one comfortable dwelling and another and tells of meetings with all sort of prominent people. By championing the North Africans and the worker priests, by constantly denouncing the degeneration of French justice, by engaging in violent polemics with a great many of his well-known contemporaries—Guy Mollet, Maurice Schumann, Pierre-Henri Teitgen, Edgar Faure, J.-P. Sartre, Jean Cocteau, etc.—has he not just found a gratifying way of filling his declining years by becoming a public figure of a new kind, and exercising his talent for invective without much danger to himself?

There is something in this criticism. He is certainly not a fanatical self-immolator like Simone Weil, whom he is always careful to quote with respect as being of a superior nature. The possibility of his being actually manhandled is rather remote. Also, his behaviour is not without a certain imitativeness. He obviously compares himself to Émile Zola and Anatole France, who were hated by the Right Wing during his boyhood as he himself is now hated. He was also very sensitive about Gide's greater influence. He seemed quite transparently jealous of him, irritated by the fact that he appeared to manage so well without God, and keen to take over his position when he died. But like Gide, too, he is a subtle man, who is always prepared to make public confession of his weaknesses, so that they cannot be held against him. He has admitted that his public activity developed when his inspiration as a novelist began to fail. He knows that his motives are impure; that he enjoys giving rein to his sarcastic verve. But he turns this very neatly by saying that, ultimately, he is not helping his reputation as a writer, because his most successful sallies will be forgotten, with the mediocrities who prompted them:

> Am I completely disinterested, then? Undoubtedly! But with too much passion, and often too much pleasure, so that I mistrust my motives.

Actually, this mistrust makes no difference. He goes on behaving exactly as before.

These impurities and self-contradictions having been admitted, however, it still remains true that Mauriac, the polemicist, serves a very good purpose. He could not, as an ordinary journalist, write in the same manner or carry the same weight. As a landowner, an Academician, a Nobel Prize winner, and a *Grand-Croix de la Légion d'honneur*, he is a force to be reckoned with. It is as if, having devoted the major part of his career to describing in his novels what is most acrid and narrow-minded in the private lives of the French bourgeoisie, he had, after winning official recognition, decided to step outside the claustrophobic atmosphere of his fiction to attack the public behaviour of the same bourgeoisie. He emerged, as it were, from the tangle of vipers, which was one childhood fixation, to re-fight the Dreyfus Case, another childhood fixation. And his record is very good: he was against Franco during the Spanish Civil War, he was genuinely pro-Resistance during the Occupation, he opposed the vindictive post-war purges, he was in favour of the worker-priests, he supported Mendès-France against all the more short-sighted, place-seeking politicians, and now (while still remaining on good terms with Mendès-France) he supports de Gaulle. He sees de Gaulle as an arbitrator, who can perhaps hold the balance against the army, bring the Algerian War to an end, and set the machinery of justice working properly again. He has thus played an important part in influencing the middle classes in favour of de Gaulle for the right reasons, and if the present experiment went wrong, I think he could be trusted to oppose de Gaulle, also for the right reasons. This does not add up to a political creed, of course, but at least it represents the seasoning of expediency with certain valid principles of conduct.

It is not a matter of indifference that the most famous living French Catholic should write:

> It would seem that, for some Christians, politics means freedom to do things that they would not allow themselves to do in their private lives. They are scrupulous in the confessional-box but unprincipled in the Cabinet room. That is why they have proved to be the most pernicious politicians of the last ten years.

There is vanity, but also a grain of truth, in the following remark:

> The writer who observes politicians and members of Parliament, as Maeterlinck observed ants and bees, disturbs them by the mere fact of looking at them.

As an old man loaded with honours, he makes the sort of comment that would also be useful sometimes here, if it were not left to journalistic whipper-snappers and rogue dons:

> It is a great consolation for the French people to know that in the midst of so many public

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disasters, M. Antoine Pinay has been able to continue taking the waters....

Anyone can see that M. Georges Bidault, with all his brilliant qualities, is guilty of one major sin, which is his stubbornness in denying his mistakes, in gainsaying the facts of history, in yielding to the elementary passions aroused in him by the clear-sightedness of those who have rubbed his nose in the appalling consequences of his acts....

It is obvious [in 1956, after the police had searched the flat of Professor Marrou, a critic of repression in Algeria] that Professor Henri Marrou has always been politically unreliable because from his earliest youth he was passionately interested in Saint Augustine, who was a Berber. In choosing, from among all the saints in the calendar, precisely the one who may have family connections among the Algerian rebels, the philosopher-historian justified the action of M. Bourgès-Maunoury's police, who have been to rummage amongst his papers....

Because Mauriac, the journalist, is a public embodiment of principle in this perhaps facile, but effective, way, I wonder if, in the long run, he will not prove to have been more significant than Mauriac, the novelist. Opinions differ violently about the quality of the novels. I have just re-read four of the best known and have been confirmed in my old impression that the religious feeling in them is very thin, and the so-called conflict between Sin and Grace very contrived. What I see in them—apart from some good descriptions of bourgeois pettiness—is the very mundane working out of a private obsession, hetero- and homo-sexual, which is in conflict, not with a religious conception of the personality, but simply with an early conditioning against sex. The novels are really impure in that Mauriac seems to be using a literary form to achieve a dubious emotional release, disguised as a spiritual preoccupation. There may be more spirituality in the frankly impure and often virulent pages of the *Bloc-Notes*.

J. G. Weightman

Another Fallen Idol?

Charles Beard, and How Historians Work

MANY ENCOUNTER readers, not themselves professional historians, must have wondered at the intensity and acrimony provoked by Professor Hexter's article on the rival views about the causes and nature of the English Civil War. How is it that issues of the dead past should arouse such fierce passions? Ought there not to be by now an accepted answer to the whole question? We are not, after all, dealing with some obscure intrigue never to be illuminated until the last archive yields up its secret, but with a great public debate leading to a clash of arms and regicide. Surely it must have been obvious at the time, and still obvious now, what it was all about, and who chose which side, and why. Do they really not know, or is it that academics require controversy to keep alive, or awake, and that since theology is out of fashion, history has to provide the issues to be fought over?

I do not think such questions from the outside either unfair or irrelevant; they arise not only from a natural desire to be properly informed, and to have in the hinterland of one's mind a recognisable and unchanging and, therefore, reliable picture of the past, but also from the fact that historians have tended to give to the general public a picture of themselves (and their motives and their methods) which does not easily square with such incidents as the prolonged debate over the rôle of the gentry in early Stuart England.

What they say they are doing is seeking for truth on the basis of documentary and other evidence about the past, interpreted according to recognised methods, and therefore capable of standing up to scrutiny and criticism. If the documents have been wrongly interpreted, or if new ones come to light, then some part of the story may have to be revised or even jettisoned. But the process of revision will be gradual and continuous, and each generation will build with confidence on the foundations laid by its predecessors.

Now although this is, of course, true enough for some of the field of history, and for some of the time, it bears little relation to what actually happens; in particular, it tells us nothing of why certain topics excite attention at certain times, and lead to direct clashes of opinion, while other themes are allowed to slumber, scarcely disturbed by the efforts of thesis-mongers to document the obvious and prove the indisputable.

I am not raising here, I hasten to add, the old question of the extent of a historian's "objectivity," or that of his ability to recognise "sub-

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jective factors" in his own work. Nor do I want to say anything about those historians so bound by dogma that no evidence, however blatant, can shift them. If Soviet historians cannot find evidence of "capitalist rents" in 13th-century England, because Marx said that the capitalist era only began in the 16th, they are not using argument in the way that historians recognise, and the only advantage of bringing them out of Moscow (as we recently did, in formal "cultural exchange"), to display their firmness in their faith, is to dispel any illusions about the extent of intellectual freedom in their world. Messrs. Hexter, Trevor-Roper, Stone, and Cooper are not confined by any dogma with penal sanctions attached: they are free to follow any line of enquiry their sources suggest, and to come up with what results they choose. If history were the kind of thing that the professional historians claim it is, they would freely come to the same results. In fact, they don't.

On the merits of this particular controversy, I cannot, of course, have any views. But looked at externally, it seems to me to fall into a certain pattern which is not unfamiliar. For whatever reasons—and they have probably little to do with anything Hegel or Marx may have thought—historiography, so far from being a continuous effort, proceeds normally by a kind of dialectic. The Whig historians give a picture of the origins of the English Civil War that emphasises the rôles of religion and politics; Tawney comes along and stresses the economic aspect—the rise of the gentry. This concept in turns fails to please, and Trevor-Roper suggests that, on the contrary, the gentry were in decline. If I were courageous enough to venture further, I would say that the author of *Equality* and of *The Acquisitive Society* was likely to stress the rôle of a class newly grasping after wealth and power, and that the author of *The Last Days of Hitler* might well note the destructive impulses that agitate a class robbed of the position that it believes its due. . . .

I WOULD rather illustrate my general point by quite a different example. Look for a moment across the Atlantic. There we have a parallel to the controversy over the English Civil War.

Consider what has happened to the great reputation of Charles A. Beard and of his celebrated book, *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*, originally published in 1913.

There was first the classical view of the reasons for the making of the Constitution and of the motives of the Founding Fathers. Fearing for their country's stability under a Constitution too weak to hold the States together or to enable them to face a hostile world, a group of patriots met together, produced an inspired document, and were acclaimed, and rightly, as the saviours of their country. Charles Beard's revisionism was not unlike that proposed for England by R. H. Tawney and his followers. It was now the "economic interpretation" of these events that was stressed. By examining what could be discovered (largely from hitherto neglected Treasury records) about the financial circumstances of the Founding Fathers, Beard tried to show that the kind of Constitution they made was designed to serve the interests of the particular economic group to which they belonged, and that they in fact, as individuals, stood to gain from the consequences of its coming into effect. As to the weight to be attached to this factor of direct self-interest, Beard was less clear himself than some of his vulgarisers. As Harold Laski put it in an essay in the memorial volume on Beard,

> Beard showed that the Constitution of 1787 owed its character to those who with money or public securities in their hands, as manufacturers and traders, or as the shipping interest, were gravely threatened by the chaotic insecurity that developed under the Articles of Confederation. . . .

But this was only half of the main thesis of the book. Beard was also concerned to show that with its system of "checks and balances," the Constitution was a profoundly non-democratic document, intended to prevent the majority from using their political rights to interfere with existing property relationships. It was therefore (he thought) not surprising that the struggle for ratification was only narrowly won, and then only because of the disfranchisement of much of the population which did not possess property on the scale required for voters.

Beard's revision of the accepted view of the Constitution was of great importance to those who, inspired by populism or progressivism, wished to bring about such changes as were needed for it to be made to serve democratic ends. In the memorial volume, Eric Goldman writes: "An 'Economic Interpretation' hammered the Constitution down into the arena of material interests and broke open a way to make sure that democratic constitutionalism included jobs and bread. . . ." In other words, if the Constitution had served the interests of one class, there was nothing so sacrosanct about it as to preclude revision in the interests of another.

Even within the limits of historiography, the influence of the book was enormous. Within two decades, the Beard version had expelled the older ones even from the ordinary American textbooks; a survey of these in 1936 concluded that Beard's ideas had been accepted "with virtual unanimity." Furthermore, the same general

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approach was used to press Beard's conclusions further still. If the main reason for making a new Constitution had been "economic self-interest," then should not its makers' statements about the national urgency (and emergency) be taken as little more than propaganda? Perhaps the so-called "Critical Period" before the Constitution was not so critical after all; perhaps the Americans under the Articles of Confederation actually possessed democratic institutions more or less satisfactory to all except a selfish minority? Such, at any rate, were the striking theses of the two books, *The Articles of Confederation* and *The New Nation* by Merrill Jensen of Wisconsin, Beard's most distinguished disciple.

Beard's own reputation in his later years was affected by the extreme isolationist stand which he took against Rooseveltian policies, and American involvement in the Second World War; this separated him from many of his former associates on the liberal-left. His opposition to the war even led him to re-examine the constitutional period in the light of his preoccupation with the dangers of "militarism," and by 1943 he was prepared to see the Constitution as perhaps the only alternative, in 1787, to direct military rule. Still, when the memorial volume was published in 1954, it was still safe to regard the Beard view of 1913 as the current orthodoxy. That position can no longer be maintained.

THE first blow was struck by a young historian, Miss Cecelia Kenyon, in an article published in the *William and Mary Quarterly* (in 1955), and devoted to a study of the arguments actually adduced against the new Constitution when it was put to the vote in the thirteen States. Miss Kenyon had obviously decided that Beard's prestige had prevented this being done before:

> One of the gravest defects of the late Charles Beard's economic interpretation of the Constitution is the limited perspective it has encouraged in those who have accepted it, and the block to fruitful investigation of the ideas and institutions of the Revolutionary Age to which it has been conducive. . . .

What she in fact discovered was that the dividing line between federalists and anti-federalists was *not* an economic one, but a difference over the nature of man and government. It was a question of "whether republican government could be extended to embrace a nation, or whether it must be limited to the comparatively small political and geographical units which the separate States then constituted." In the manner of Rousseau, the anti-federalists feared the distortions of the representative system; they feared that men in office would make themselves too powerful; so far from wanting to see democratic majorities exercising an unhampered sway, they wanted even more "checks and balances," including a council of revision alongside the President.

> Had the Constitution been altered to satisfy the major structural changes desired by the Anti-Federalists [writes Miss Kenyon] the House of Representatives would have been considerably larger; there would have been four rather than three branches of the government; the President would have been limited as he is now to two terms; the Senators would have been similarly limited and also subject to recall by their State governments. These changes might have been beneficial. It is doubtful that they would have pleased the late Charles Beard and his followers. . . .

Even more fundamental, since it challenged the Beard thesis as a whole, was Professor Robert E. Brown's book, *Charles Beard and the Constitution*, published in 1956. Whereas Richard Hofstadter (in an essay republished in the memorial volume) had given particular credit to Beard's use of sources and had said of his book that "methodologically it is a triumph of systematic intelligence," Brown accuses Beard of a slipshod handling of the evidence, and concludes that for some of his major assertions and assumptions there is no evidence at all. Thus, Brown denies the very existence of a specific "debtor-farmer" class which fills a key rôle in Beard's presentation of the class struggle of the period. He denies also that the Founding Fathers were characterised particularly by the possession of personalty in the form of money or bonds as opposed to real estate:

> Some of them owned personalty, more of them owned realty, and if their property was adversely affected by conditions under the Articles of Confederation, so also was the property of the bulk of the people in the country, middle-class farmers as well as town artisans.

Finally, Beard overlooked the extent to which the America of the Constitutional period was a society in which property was so widely diffused that very large numbers were in fact entitled to vote, even if they were too unconcerned to do so. Because it was a fundamentally propertied middle-class society, "practically everybody was interested in the protection of property," and there was no basic division of class-interest to separate the Founding Fathers and their associates from the bulk of the population. "The Constitution," he writes, "was created about as much by the whole people as any government could be which embraced a large area and depended on representation rather than on direct participation."

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Brown then rejects the whole revisionist position and finds himself, as he says, nearer in his attitude to that of George Washington himself, when he wrote of the Constitution that it was "the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation, and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy."

It is clearly too soon to say whether the Brown-Kenyon offensive will carry the day, or what counter-measures the Beard forces may yet produce. Nor for my purpose does it matter. Enough has been said to justify the parallel with the English controversy over the Civil War. For here, too, there is a great public event concerning which all the evidence has long been available, and where yet no agreement on interpretation seems to be in sight.

Can the rise and fall of the Beard thesis help to explain how historians operate? How aptly the Beard thesis came along at a time when men of goodwill were feeling frustrated by the apparent constitutional inhibitions on remedial action by government against economic injustices and social evils! It came, too, at a time when there was a general climate of opinion favourable to "economic interpretations" of history and politics. The book was a landmark more by virtue of its impact than by virtue of strict originality. Finally, as Richard Hofstadter very shrewdly pointed out, the discoveries about contemporary politics made during the era of the "muck-rakers" had made Americans more than ready to believe that people's motives in politics were less pure than they made out, and had given them a strong bias in favour of "the inside story."

But if we assume that reasons that had little to do with the development of historical science explain Beard, will not someone have similarly to explain Miss Kenyon and Professor Brown and any recruits to their new banners? One is tempted to believe that economic interpretations are likely to become unfashionable anyhow, and partly (though no doubt unjustly) because of their mishandling by the dogmatists of Marxism. But there is a more positive reason for expecting a shift in the nature of the approach to the constitutional period of American history, though it is not evident in the work of the two critics of Beard's work who have appeared so far.

When Beard wrote, in 1913, the unity of the United States could be taken for granted; the paths from "reconstruction" to "reunion" had been trodden; the problems that concerned his generation were those of the nation as a whole. But recent events in the United States may give people pause before they take national unity for granted; and still more important, the United States has had to deal with yet another problem of the proper scale of government. *Our* generation is likely to be preoccupied not so much with direct economic and social problems within the national framework as with the building of institutions which can harness men's energies for creative endeavour on a supra-national scale. In this task the work and theories of the Founding Fathers are likely to acquire a new relevance. In studying their ideas on federalism and on the distribution of power between smaller and larger units of government, we are increasingly less affected by any personal elements that went into their own choices.

How full of hidden pitfalls is the placid landscape of the professional historiographer! Can one, by following the course of historical studies themselves, decide what will seem important next? or what views people will take about it? Is the kind of "evidence" available (or the lack of it) really all that decisive? Historians, like other men, are at the mercy of the changes and chances of the historical process itself. When we begin to rend each other too unmercifully (or to take ourselves too seriously), surely it is time to remember how little we really know.

Max Beloff

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E. M. Forster at Eighty

By K. W. Gransden

THE night before I went to see E. M. Forster, we had a burglar. He ate some chocolate, but apart from that didn't take much (not much to take), and one tried not to be Bast-like: departing, nevertheless, in a flurry of policemen and telephone calls to the insurance company, instead of a suitably prepared atmosphere of calm. It was trivial enough—too trivial to mention when I arrived at King's—but it struck me later as being the kind of coincidence that might have figured in a Forsterian chapter: chance bumping ungracefully up against plans, the unexpected muddle invading the order of the inner life. (I daresay there was even a moral in the muddle.) In Forster's books, the element of surprise does much to keep things continually alive. Introspective writers, quiet-lifers, often underplay this element; and I never understand why Forster has been criticised for his abruptnesses. We want more surprises (or so I should have thought) in our novels, not less. To be on the side of what Hardy called "hap" is to be on the side of life.

Forster has fought shy of making general pronouncements outside his books. He dislikes arguments and interviews, the modern paraphernalia with which the outer life pretends to take an interest in the inner. He does not appear on television; but I had no doubt, talking to him, that if he did, he would reaffirm, as Bertrand Russell recently did, the values he has always upheld. In this he is typical of his generation. People sometimes say liberal-humanist values* are soft, have become discredited and inadequate. That view would be easier to argue if it were not for the sustained convictions of Russell and Forster, which suggest that the ideas have discredited us, not the other way round. Those ideas have had to take a worse beating than almost any other ideas ever held by western man. Forster has not modified his views "because I still think I'm right." We should salute him on his eightieth birthday for the quality and the constancy of his spiritual and intellectual processes.

Despite his retirement, his acting out of the principles of the inner life, no writer has made more general statements about life; not only in two books of essays, *Abinger Harvest* and *Two Cheers for Democracy*, but also in the context of five not very long novels. Life in these novels is not just vivid and vivacious and done from the inside; it is also carefully constructed into art so as to support a large quantity of deliberate and explicit comment. Shy of criticising life outside his books, of life inside them he has been an unsparing critic. If you want his views on marriage, for instance, George and Lucy, Margaret and Henry, Leonard and Jackie, Rickie and Agnes, etc., give you all the answers you can possibly want. No writer has made the particular more capable of sustaining the general. What you cannot do, though—and this is why Forster is hard to write about—is to add up all the particulars on one side, and all the generals on the other, and produce a single sweeping equation. If you tried, you would be bound to find you had left something out, someone unaccounted for. Art does not quite equal life: there are tensions, ambiguities, evasions, cancellings-out—even teasings. The carpet is beautiful, but the figure in the carpet does not shriek at you.

I ASKED Forster if he agreed with Margaret Schlegel when she said "I quite expect to end my life caring most for a place." He did not agree. His order was the same as it always had been: first people, then books, then places. He felt that many modern novelists seemed less interested in people than he was. "They have the vision and the integrity," he said: but too often their fiction seemed primarily, instead of ulti-

* I originally wrote "Bloomsbury values," but Forster has said in a letter to me that he does not regard himself as belonging or having belonged to Bloomsbury, but that critics like putting people into groups. I still think he and Bloomsbury have certain things in common.

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mately, a pretext for ideas. A writer who starts off with people is much harder to classify than a writer who starts off with an idea. The difficulty with Forster is that his ideas are interesting too, but if you forget the people then you distort the ideas.

It was not really surprising that he put places third. His novels are full of places, but they always stand—as the people never do—for some single idea. The people are ambiguous, as real people are. The places are not. There is nothing good about Sawston and nothing bad about Cambridge. "Man is so made that he cannot remember long without a symbol": and a place that is not a symbol, a place without a genius, is of interest only to tourists or antiquaries.

We also talked about Forster's latest adventures in the arts: the Byzantine stuff—he had just revisited Ravenna; Alban Berg, with whom he was making headway, some mediæval composers, with whom he wasn't. Of modern poets, the one he read with most pleasure was Auden. He spoke, too, of the pleasure he himself had got out of writing: a pleasure transmitted, I said, to his readers. This double and continuous pleasure is one of the reasons why his books are so much alive: they have in them not only life but a continuous response to life. Their author's own tutelary awareness of, and pleasure in, life, seems to keep the books alive, reaffirming them, living on with them: an example of this is the way in which, in a recent article ("A View Without a Room") he brought *A Room With a View* up-to-date—a book which was televised recently on I.T.V. with, all things considered, remarkable success.

All this makes it hard to realise that the majority of Forster's novels are fifty years old; all but one of them were out by 1910; the last came out fourteen years later, the year before I was born. Yet the early novels depend very little on documenting the legendary Edwardian rentier's paradise: one can read for pages without being reminded that cigarettes cost twopence a packet or whatever it was. His books do not arouse nostalgia. One of the advantages of Forster's independence was that it left him free to seek the good life elsewhere. I remember my first reading of *The Longest Journey*. It was at Cambridge, of course: in the cold post-war winter of 1946–47. Rickie's choice of meals and room-service seemed very remote, as one shivered over a weekly bucket of coal and chose between baked beans in hall, on the help-yourself system, and baked beans in Lyons in Petty Cury, also on the help-yourself system. Now I suppose Rickie's existence is again possible. Even over material details, time seems to be on Forster's side.

Personal relations have been called the sacred cow of Bloomsbury, but the cow is there, and is the novelist's first concern, though afterwards, if he wants to, he can also be Shelley, Marx, Wittgenstein, or Dr. Arnold Toynbee. Even Orwell, whose later books, apparently primarily political, Forster admires, cared about politics because he cared about England, and cared about England because he cared about the English and hated "the smelly little orthodoxies which are at present contending for our souls." Orwell's political context is not that of the professional politician's: it is the opposite of that, it is a moral context; so is Lawrence's and Forster's; so were George Eliot's and Samuel Butler's; a great line of nonconformists.

To help celebrate the birthday, I have been rereading Forster's novels. The earlier ones have been rather overshadowed by the last two. The first, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, is slight—one could almost imagine it a libretto—but its structure reverberates, towards the end, with the famous Forsterian echo. Here the physical, despite its cruelties, is exalted; here Italy is distinguished from Italians and the predominance of people over places first asserted. Philip Herriton starts with Baedeker, responding beautifully to Italy but not at all to Italians; just as Adela Quested wanted to see India but not Indians. The death of the baby is melodramatic, almost operatic, coloured, perhaps, by the scene at the opera just before.

But Philip finally realises that life must go on, after one has seen the vision and been changed.

> The thing was even greater than he had imagined. No one but himself would ever see round it now.

The intellectual must make up for his own lack of direct experience by understanding fully the experience of others. Philip is Forster's first convert. This pattern is repeated in the first part of *The Longest Journey*, Forster's own favourite among his novels, though he feels it has serious faults. (It is the most romantic of his novels.) This pattern—the intellectual, the artist, the "outsider," understanding and valuing the passions of others but not sharing them—explains that old stumbling-block of the critics, Gerald's early death, and Rickie's impassioned outburst to Agnes: "the greatest thing is over." In a sense, the whole of the rest of the book is Agnes' revenge against Rickie for having understood her without being able to satisfy her. In trying to take Gerald's place, in trying to be a doer instead of an observer, Rickie is false to himself—the unforgivable crime in the Forsterian calendar, because from it all other kinds of deceit proceed.

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Forster read classics, and much of his work seems to reflect the classical division of man into the rational part and the animal part. In this philosophy the Christian concept of Will does not enter. (Perhaps this lack of the single Will-concept, so familiar a driving-force in, say, Lawrence, may partly explain why Forster's novels are so unlike any others we have.) In *The Longest Journey*, Herbert, Agnes, and Mrs. Failing are aspects of the false and the conventional; Stephen and Ansell are different and complementary aspects of the real. (Gerald seems to be real as a lover, false as a man.) In the final meeting between Stephen and Ansell the intellectual and physical aspects of the real join up, to create a situation in which the truth can be seen and (in a speech of rapt repetitive emotional vision) proclaimed by the articulate partner, Ansell. Forster allows a situation to generalise, but not a single character. A character who was a self-contained walking philosophy with no need of other people, containing within himself the whole of salvation (or the whole of damnation) would be false to life. Ansell needed Stephen to complete his case against Agnes, to prove to Rickie that he had been false. We all need other people, even if only for pettiness or revenge or to help us act out our lies.

A Room With a View is a charming and curious novel: at times a Jane Austenish comedy, at times a novelette, at times Lawrentian. George is a Lawrentian hero, though Forster is more interested in the social proprieties than Lawrence was, and none of his characters are supermen, a concept which would repel him. Lucy, with her music and her hidden depths (spotted, till George comes along, only by Vyse and Beebe, intellectual observers) is almost a Lawrentian heroine, "awakening" and all. Forster does not allow his characters an easy break-through. He lets the world have its say; he never isolates his characters from the world or lets them ignore it. He puts in, and not just for narrative purposes, as much opposition as he can. Classical pessimism, a classical belief in design and in learning by suffering, urge him towards the hard way. Most of his marriages are unhappy, partly because people will not recognise their own limitations. And even behind the happy marriage of Lucy and George there stands, in a remarkably sinister passage, "like a long black column," the figure of the cultured Mr. Beebe, less noble in defeat than Vyse.

George triumphs in practice where the others could only in theory. George had all the Forsterian virtues, being serious, truthful, and passionate. But even he is not completely self-contained. He is guided from off-stage by old Mr. Emerson, who belongs with Mrs. Wilcox and Mrs. Moore: one of Forster's guardians. Law-

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rence would have made George's triumph a solo of the Will. And Lucy has her guardian too, in "poor" Charlotte, who was perhaps on the side of the angels after all.

Howards End is the most elaborate of Forster's novels. It is a house built to last, a solid product of an age of ripeness and expansion. (So many modern novels are less like houses than furnished rooms, thus reflecting their age. One moves from one to another: barely distinguishable now, what will they look like in fifty years?) All the same, *Howards End* lacks some of the ruthlessness and hardness of the earlier novels. It has almost too much sweetness and light. The famous motto, "only connect," comes very near to saying "try and see all sides." And the sordid bits do not come off. Forster cannot manage the sordid: it is one way of measuring the gap between him and us; the sordid is our element, and few contemporary writers fail to do it well, even if they cannot do anything else. This explains people's criticism of the Bast episodes. All the same, Bast himself remains an interesting shot at the submerged. There is something pathetic about clerkship: it is neither the mind nor the body, and few writers have taken the trouble to think about it. The final indictment of the civilisation of luggage, of "such culture as is implied by the advertisements of anti-bilious pills," is not that it has created Wilcoxes, who can look after themselves or get others to look after them, but that it has created Basts: the new slave class, working not in galleys with their muscles, but in offices with mental reflexes conditioned to some pointless mechanical process.

As for the Wilcoxes, I feel about them rather as Tibby did. I don't manage them. It has been said that *Howards End* is about who shall inherit England. Schlegels, who have the right values but no roots, are the obvious Forsterian candidates. Wilcoxes, to whom houses are things you buy, do up and sell, are eventually to fade out, and Howards End go—indirectly if not directly through the influence of Mrs. Wilcox—to Margaret, and after her to the child of Helen and Bast, the child of instinct and defiance, of idealism and failure. If this happy ending seems a bit too good to be true, the reason, perhaps, is that, though it is important as a drawing together of narrative and spiritual threads, there lies behind it a much more important ending: the victory of the Margaret-Helen relationship. This is the best thing in the book, and matters more than all the other relationships, both to the sisters themselves and to their creator.

"Personal relations are the real life for ever and ever." It is the apotheosis of Protestant individualism, the triumph of "I am I"; the belief that one must trust people, and that one can most easily do that if one has money. In Butler's masterpiece, *The Way of All Flesh*, a novel that leads direct to Forster, it is a private income which saves Ernest after Victorian education, parental stupidity, lack of imagination, theology, crooks, and a marriage of truly Forsterian inappropriateness have all done their worst. Saves him in a sense, that is; as with Rickie, the spiritual part of him has long proceeded to its ruin; but at least he is free. People with money are most able to feel trust; they are also most fitted to express it. Money is important in Forster's novels, as it is in George Eliot's—the Lydgate section of *Middlemarch*, for instance: the Victorian nonconformist ideals of solvency and self-help.

IT IS not just a matter of money, either, but of money being used in and for freedom. Nowadays you can, or so they say, get money for almost anything. But in the civilisation of the expense account you must fill in forms, give reasons, report back. Money is nearly always tied. You must sell yourself to get it. When Rickie tried to offer Gerald and Agnes money in freedom, he was snubbed; they could not believe he meant it; they treated him like a Wilcox. When Helen tried to give Bast money he thought she was not serious. Money seldom brings freedom; it is seldom given in freedom or to those who believe in freedom. And with this economic shrinkage, a corresponding moral and intellectual shrinkage has come about. There is less money now and less free thought; more trust-funds, less trust. Forster has said that he does not believe in belief. But are we any longer free not to believe? Forster's novels were the high-water mark of economic and intellectual expansion. It is no accident that the hey-day of the Wilcoxes was also the hey-day of the Schlegels. Never did private incomes go further or personal relations seem more precious. An age of defensive orthodoxy, suspicion, fear, and pretence can hardly expect to be an age in which love and friendship will flourish. This may be why Forster rightly detects that modern fiction is less interested in people as individuals. The truth is, we are no longer as different from each other as we used to be. It is more a matter of "preparing a face to meet the faces that you meet." We are almost back to Blake's London: marks of weakness, marks of woe, vulgarity without optimism, efficiency without imagination. We are becoming organised into types and groups, not merely intruding our own limitations but imposing them on each other. In such circumstances, the task of reminding us that each individual is unique is little short of heroic. Perhaps in this lies the reason for Forster's long silence as a novelist: a silence that matters less because of

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what he first accomplished. The pattern of people's uniqueness no longer dominates our society.

MY LAST question to Forster was whether he felt satisfied, on the whole, with the way the critics had dealt with his work. He said he did. So I shall now take him at his word and not attempt a concluding revaluation of *A Passage to India*. It is undoubtedly his masterpiece; I believe it was a set book in the 'twenties for the Indian Civil Service; it has received ample attention. Quite apart from anything else, it is a social and political document of the greatest interest and value. You might almost say it was the first intelligent and sympathetic book about India ever written by an Englishman. Of its few successors, only J. R. Ackerley's *Hindoo Holiday* stands out; Orwell's early novel *Burmese Days* seems crude and naïve in comparison. India caught Forster's imagination; it made his fortune as a descriptive writer; it took him out of himself and enabled him to transcend his limitations. It added the wine of life to the teacup of experience. It brought him face to face with religion, which finds little place in the early books. Middle-class England "before the bombardment" was a highly selective society which could afford to turn its back on large areas of creation and large tracts of experience. "...Indians, foreigners, birds, caves, railways, and the stars": if Forster's earlier novels were water-colours, his last one has the scale and comprehensiveness and richness and confidence of a canvas in oils by a master. It is a prophetic book, not only about race-relations but also about personal ones. It is curious, at a time when anti-humanistic mysticism seems to be having a renaissance in some quarters, to re-read the finale of *A Passage to India*, Forster's epilogue as a novelist. "Temple" describes a Hindu festival. Hinduism is a very old religion flourishing in a very old part of the earth. The two main characters, Aziz and Fielding, whose attempt at friendship is defeated by muddle and misunderstanding and the weight of different conventions, are neither of them Hindus. To neither of them does the festival mean anything. They have taken their stand on enlightenment, and when that fails, they part, defeated.

The Hindu festival is seen through the eyes of Professor Godbole, a Hindu, and one of Forster's mysterious guardians, like Mrs. Wilcox and Mrs. Moore: a great slipper-away, a blurred figure with whom personal relations, by a central and elusive Forsterian irony, are unsatisfactory, irrelevant even. At the opening of the finale Professor Godbole has slipped away from the preceding muddle, to attend his own business:

> Some hundreds of miles westward of the Marabar caves, and two years later in time, Professor Narayan Godbole stands in the presence of God.

The tone of that sentence, and of much of what follows, is as unequivocal as a trumpet. Forster described the festival of Gokal Ashtami non-fictionally, his tongue in his cheek, the interested but sceptical observer, in *The Hill of Devi*. But it is Godbole the believer who dominates the festival in the novel.

> The divine entering each worshipper caused them all to resemble each other during the moment of its indwelling.

At the moment of communion, personal relationships are transcended, annihilated by a less articulate brotherhood. Hinduism, indiscriminating in its hocus-pocus and its butter-smearing horse-play and its joyful belief in the universal, can comprehend the wisp of hay, the echo in the cave. If you widen the context sufficiently you will include the whole of creation, not just the civilised minority, but millions like those who now come to places like Notting Hill and find that "the earth still separates and the sky still says no."

Thomas Mann

The Ironic German. By ERICH HELLER. *Secker and Warburg*. 25s.

PROFESSOR Erich Heller has written a fascinating book about a fascinating subject, and we should be duly grateful to him for throwing so much light on a writer who so much loved to wander so evasively in so many dark places as Thomas Mann. Not that the light is entirely without shadows, or that sometimes it does not seem to fall rather more brightly on Professor Heller than on Mann. But whether or not we agree with Professor Heller in his conclusions, what he brilliantly succeeds in doing is to demonstrate the immense scope and seriousness of Mann's work, the almost inordinately ambitious claims which it implicitly makes, and the sustained and gigantic effort it represents to give a literary and artistic form to what Mann took to be the fundamental problems of his time. Our respect for that effort is all the greater because those problems were, in Mann's pessimistic view, the problems of a world so deeply

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fallen into chaos, incoherence, and decay as to be almost totally recalcitrant to any attempt to impose artistic form upon it.

Perhaps the most interesting parts of Professor Heller's book are those in which he shows how profoundly Mann was affected by the ideas which he inherited from his predecessors of the German romantic and idealist movements, and especially Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Equally, he shows how closely, indeed almost uncannily, Mann's writings reflect German romantic theories of a *Universalpoesie*, especially as adumbrated with a kind of visionary genius by Schelling. Professor Heller's exposition of these themes will have, for English readers, a particular fascination because the kinds of ideas with which he is concerned are, for many, alien and unfamiliar. It is a long time now since German romanticism and German idealism enjoyed much honour or understanding in this country, though perhaps already one can detect the slightest of turns in the tide of philosophical fashion. To follow Professor Heller's account of romantic and idealist influences on Mann has all the excitement of a breakneck chase across country which has not been hunted over for a long time; and if at moments one cannot help wondering whether the quarry will turn out to be a wild goose, that in no way interferes with the pleasures of the pursuit. One only hopes that Professor Heller will carry the pursuit even further and one day give us a literary analysis of German romanticism, together with a philosophical assessment of its value and relevance to-day; then he would really have hunted down his quarry.

In the case of Mann, however, it is precisely the feeling that in the end he never caught his fox and killed it that, despite all one's admiration for his work, still leaves one in doubt about his stature as an artist or perhaps even, sometimes, as a man. In following, from *Buddenbrooks* down to *Felix Krull*, ideas which come to seem repetitive however varied a form they take, one sometimes has the feeling that the *ewige Wiederkehr* has returned in a particularly monotonous shape; the effect is claustrophobic, as of moving in a circle from which there is no escape. Professor Heller himself is evidently aware that it is possible to doubt the value of Mann's achievement, far as he is from sharing such a doubt; his discussion of *The Magic Mountain* takes the form of a dialogue in which one Professor Heller answers questions raised by another, slightly more sceptical Professor Heller. It is a slightly bewildering debate, and at the end of it one knows that the Professor has got the better of it, but is not quite sure which one. And however persistent Professor Heller is in asking himself questions, and however ingenious and stimulating in answering them, at the end one still feels that he has not asked the one question which one would have liked him to answer. Briefly and crudely, the question is this: Does Thomas Mann succeed in convincing us that irony, his most characteristic and fundamental quality, is an adequate total response to the situation with which his novels are concerned, which is nothing less than European man in the period of his decline and collapse?

THE very title of this study suggests another form in which one may put the same question. The sub-species of European man with which Mann was particularly concerned was *Homo Teutonicus* (now only a shadow of his former self and likely to remain so until he succeeds in coming to terms with his past), even though he is sometimes called Joseph and sometimes Settembrini. Despite his long years of exile, and despite the extraordinary depth and width of his sympathy and culture, Mann was and remained one of the most German of writers, and Professor Heller points out how significant it is that, as Mann became more and more dependent upon a foreign audience, his style developed an almost barbarous complexity and tortuousness which at times make it hardly readable except in the original, and perhaps not always then. But is it conceivable that any German, artist or not, contemplating his own fate and the fate of others in a period when Germany, with "the sure touch of a dream-walker," was seeking and achieving her own irretrievable ruin, could believe that irony was really the means by which this terrible progress could be transformed into art? Is a smile the answer to Buchenwald?

Professor Heller does not ask these questions, and perhaps he may think it improper to ask them. One feels that one may take the liberty of doing so because unless they are asked and answered by Germans it will be impossible for Germany to overcome and surmount the intellectual and emotional inhibitions by which she is at present afflicted. But one notices that Professor Heller himself, in using "irony" as the master key to the secrets of Mann's dark and deliberate ambiguities, acknowledges that the word has to accommodate such a variety and multiplicity of meanings that one may legitimately doubt whether, so used, it has any meaning at all. One almost begins to feel that sooner or later Professor Heller will tell us that irony is a German word which can only be understood in a German sense; indeed he does tell us precisely this about the word "parody," as he uses it to describe certain elements in Mann's work, especially in *Felix Krull*. Yet strangely enough, among such a proliferation of meanings,

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there are some quite ordinary uses of the English word which he does not feel it necessary to consider. The first is that meaning of the word by which we can reasonably use it in speaking of the *saeva indignatio* of Swift, the greatest master of irony in English. How surprising it is that the German master, faced with the same condition of barbarism and inhumanity, should never have used his favourite weapon to express the same savage indignation which it provoked in Swift. And it is true that Swift died howling like a dog and Mann with an ironic smile; one may still doubt which was the greater artist.

There is another use of the word, as given by so reputable an authority as Webster, which is that of "dissembling." We cannot help being disappointed that Professor Heller does not examine the question how far Mann's use of irony was a means, not of illuminating and transcending the human condition as it revealed itself in his own time, but of dissembling and evading it. For here especially Professor Heller might have drawn an enlightening contrast between Mann and his intellectual forebears, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, on whose influence so much stress is laid. Schopenhauer's vision of life as a scene of endless suffering and misery in which a blind and irrational will ceaselessly and repetitively struggles to assert itself is a truly terrible one. Schopenhauer's answer to that situation, expressed in a prose style of incomparable beauty, was in essence the answer of the saint: the complete and utter abnegation of the will as man's only release from the cycle of torture which it imposes on him. In Nietzsche we find the same pessimistic vision of human life, but even sharper and more intense because of his unequalled psychological insight; his answer to that situation, as expressed in the idea of the Superman, was the answer of the hero.

In Mann's lifetime the same situation, as Mann fully comprehended, had changed only in that it had degenerated even beyond Nietzsche's darkest and most brilliant forebodings, and the vision of the Superman had itself become an instrument for intensifying the very condition from which it was meant to save us. What was Mann's answer? Let us quote Professor Heller:

> It was against this background of domestic perversity that Thomas Mann went in search of the true relationship between myth and reason, poetry and rational knowledge, community and the individual, and created from present tears and horror his most serene book, a *gaya scienza* of man and the world, and that good government of men and affairs which Hans Castorp sincerely and ineffectively used to meditate (and "governing" was what he used to call his meditations) as he sat among the alpine flowers, the irreconcilable opposites, and the sick disputants of *The Magic Mountain*. Irony? *Joseph and his Brothers*

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is, if nothing else, one of the greatest and friendliest conquests the imagination has ever had over irony.

This is well said, and is certainly an admirable description of what Mann set out to achieve in *Joseph and his Brothers*. But can we really believe that, just as Schopenhauer gave the answer of the saint, and Niezsche of the hero, to a fundamentally intolerable situation, so Mann in a situation which if it had changed at all had only changed for the worse, gave the answer of the artist? That a *gaya scienza* really is the artist's answer to all the other bloodthirsty sciences which so successfully rule the world? It is indeed difficult to believe that, but *The Ironic German* does not give one a single reason why one should not believe it, and this is perhaps why, in spite of its knowledge and insight and genuine brilliance, it leaves us profoundly unsatisfied.

Yet perhaps, in the passage quoted above, it may be possible to find some clues to a better answer. Mann, we may be sure, genuinely believed that in face of what Professor Heller so modestly describes as "domestic perversity" he could go off in search of the true relationship between myth and reason, poetry and rational knowledge, community and the individual, and present the result as a friendly conquest of imagination over irony. But we cannot ourselves believe in that conquest, or at any rate believe that it is a conquest of any significance or value in comparison with the cataclysmic defeats which, in the period of Mann's search, were being inflicted upon humanity in the real world. What Mann achieved was not victory itself, but the semblance and appearance of victory, and he was able to do this only by dissembling and evading the real nature of the little "domestic perversity" which has no place, except in a symbolic and metaphysical form, in Joseph's Egypt. The *gaya scienza* is not really created out of "the present tears and horror," but out of symbolic tears and metaphysical horrors; the present, the real tears and horrors were being created out of the flesh and blood of living men and women and these have no part to play in Mann's novels; in being transmuted into literature they have ceased to cry and they have ceased to scream.

It is significant that when, in *Doctor Faustus*, which Professor Heller describes as "Thomas Mann's eloquent compromise with silence, a work which is stupendous if not great," Mann comes to terms directly with the appalling tragedy of Germany, he should present it in the form of an infernal compact between the artist and the devil. This was not of course the true nature of the tragedy. Was it one more touch of irony that Mann chose to represent it in this form because he knew that it was not, and realised that his art, like Adrian Leverkühn's, had been an affair of trafficking with the devil? And from this it was an easy and perhaps inevitable step, in *Felix Krull*, to show the artist as an impostor and a *farceur*.

Goronwy Rees

The Dying Novel?

The Rack. By A. E. Ellis. *Heinemann*. 18s.

The Middle Age of Mrs. Eliot. By Angus Wilson. *Secker and Warburg*. 18s.

The Bell. By Iris Murdoch. *Chatto and Windus*. 15s.

The Cautious Heart. By William Sansom. *Hogarth Press*. 13s. 6d.

The notion of the dying novel has lapsed into a half-credited joke: no one quite believes it, no one quite rejects it, no one can suggest an alternative mirror for the times. One unestablished and three established novelists, every one of them worth, not a quarter of this column, but the whole of it, make nonsense of the notion, so individual and so vigorous are they all, so irreplaceable by any other form.

The most impressive and the most surprising is *The Rack*, a first novel and a haunting experience, an eye-opener in the plain sense that one could never have the smallest idea, if one had not suffered its particular tortures, what its subject—tuberculosis—involves; or indeed, unless one had suffered any long and serious illness. Its story is simple, hopeless, terrible: a young man spends two-and-a-half years in a sanatorium in the French Alps. As the careful description of illness is usually distasteful to the healthy, it seems almost miraculous that out of this long misery of pain, symptoms, fears, false cures, operations, and the far more dreadful small operations performed without anæsthetics—the endless prickings and drainings and so on—one should come feeling, not nausea and repulsion, but admiration, even a sort of solidarity with suffering, something tougher than sympathy or even pity. The torture of the body, daily, over months, over years, the impossibility of any other life, of any real future hope, of any normal human relationship: all this is set down in a curious way that at first seems cold, blank, unexciting, and after a while turns out to be the most effective screw to turn. Paul, the hero, comes from a strange blank background, something undiscussable, floating in a vacuum neither happy nor unhappy, where feeling and love had no place, where he was cut off from the little that remained of his family and his friends meant

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little to him either. At the sanatorium he falls in love with a Belgian girl, a patient like himself, whose love for the first time brings him a hope more terrible than despair. This granite book makes no concessions, none: the ending is despair that reaches the pitch of magnificence.

The three established novelists, although so diverse, at present have so much in common that it is tempting to press the point. Roughly contemporaries—in what one might call early middle age—they have all about the same number of novels behind them, might be said to stand roughly equal in critical esteem, and have all established reputations for an extremely individual brilliance, a firework approach that has often left one admiring but breathless. All three, at a serious level, were writers with something of a gimmick, a trick of style or behaviour or attitude easily recognised, parodied, imitated, and admired; and now all three seem determined to reject the familiar badges of their past reputations, to abandon virtuosity of performance and achieve instead a wider virtuosity in proving their grasp of new subjects, treatments, and attitudes, a new understanding and maturity. And so with all three, one has the curious feeling of recognition and surprise at once; the mannerisms have to some extent been abandoned, the obvious individuality muted, but in each case replaced by a greater self-confidence. As well as the settling period of their career as novelists, this seems a time when they are pausing, breathing, trying out major themes.

Angus Wilson's *The Middle Age of Mrs. Eliot* is the most ambitious of the three, a novel conceived on the grand scale, and puzzlingly but satisfactorily rejecting the past intellectual high jinks, the past social pigeon-holing. In a sense this novel has social pigeon-holding for its main theme—the way in which social alterations alter completely a woman's life—but there is more to it than that: there is the attempt, not, to my mind, a successful one, to bring a woman entirely alive, to enter her spirit and leave us knowing her, with sympathy but objectiveness, through and through. Mrs. Eliot is an attractive if slightly shrill woman in her forties, happily though childlessly married, when her husband's sudden death leaves her facing realities she has never met. One is slightly shocked (and Mr. Wilson makes it seem perfectly credible) to find that her life and character depended almost entirely on her husband's position, success, affection, and support; unsupported, financial security gone, the tastes of a lifetime now turned into impossible luxuries, the world crashes in. Friends she treated as equal now seem impossibly remote, and she rejects their offers and kindness; there remain three lame ducks she once tolerantly bore with, who in turn offer her help, and in turn let her down. Then last, there remains her brother David, a man struggling to make life bearable and even fruitful as a homosexual sworn to chastity. Through David, through the life on his Sussex nursery garden, she finds a kind of redemption, and the strength to break away in the end; but David is such a priggish and sanctimonious bore that one wonders how she ever put up with him. Innumerable odd characters from all sorts of walks of life pass through the book, commentators on our present way of life, yet individuals for all their social point and purpose. They, and their milieux, not the central figure, which never quite comes alive, are the point of the book: in a century from now what an accurate broad picture of our scene it will give! The scope of Mr. Wilson's talent is enthralling.

Iris Murdoch has become—I almost hesitate to say it, for two novels ago it would have seemed irrelevant—very charming; once a rather specialised taste, she has now grown irresistible (and I mean no insult by it). *The Bell* is appealing, is readable, in a way that her earlier and more dazzling books were not; has a warmth, a sympathy, an implied set of human standards, all very satisfactory and attractive. It also has a heroine that, coming from so formidably intelli-

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gent a creator, is to say the least a surprise: and a good one. Dora is one of those gay, pony-tailed art students, but unsuitably married to an art historian with a formidable presence, a hectoring manner, and an awful capacity to make his puzzled, blooming, much younger wife feel small; she leaves him, then returns to him, then leaves him again, spending the sandwich time with a curious Anglican community attached to a convent in Gloucestershire, where some religious folk ill-adjusted to the lay world are trying to live a half-way life strung between the monastic and the lay. There she has adventures, spiritual and otherwise, in connection with the installing of a great bell once hung in the convent tower (the Murdoch magic symbolism stirs, but only at moments); and the others in the community are all involved—too much involved—with one another in desperate ways that end in suicide and madness and the scattering of the community. Much of the involvement is homosexual, Michael, the community's leader, being himself a homosexual, a gentle continent soul whose life and reputation are twice ruined by boys for whom he conceives an affection he struggles to sublimate. Miss Murdoch copes with the difficult problem of making homosexual feeling and action acceptable to the average reader by dealing with it from the point of view of the man most involved: the almost-saintly Michael who finds himself, curiously but quite credibly, the object of two women's love at once. To make this theme sympathetic without making the protagonists (like Mr. Wilson's) priggish, is a triumph.

William Sansom once seemed in danger of being smothered by "style": style as an ornament and an extra, not an integral part of what he had to say, a graceful but obtrusive obsession with the elegance of presentation that occasionally came between the reader and what he was reading, shrouding instead of illuminating what he was meant to see. He now has the business well in hand; still unmistakably individual, but in its proper relation to everything else, to content and character; arising out of the atmosphere, not so much atmospheric in itself. So *The Cautious Heart* turns out to be a delight: the tale of a reluctant and on the face of it faintly unromantic love affair between two urban creatures very much of our day and telling us, with the most undidactic delicacy and amusement (his, ours), a whole lot about the attitudes of such people. The first-person hero meets and rather likes, not very much more, a girl, a "brown mouse" girl, charming though not very noticeable, and half-Turkish, called Marie O'Hara; and they have an affair, dogged by the presence of a parasite called Colin whose socks Marie mends, whose jobs Marie fixes, whose debts Marie pays... not so much a rival as a shadow, a cheerfully hopeless but expectant baby who has managed to surround himself with a committee of devotion to see to his every need. Against this insidious infiltration an ordinary lover is pretty powerless, though he takes it, in this case, with extraordinary good humour, and things are settled, or rather unsettled, in the end for the best: one supposes. The accuracy of observation is so odd, so perfect in places, that one seems to be sitting there, not outside them watching and listening, but inside the bodies of the characters, seeing with their eyes, feeling with their skin: physical sensation, appearances, the fugitive mood and moment where Mr. Sansom best flourishes, all being so splendidly pinned down.

Isabel Quigly

Burke to Orwell

Culture and Society. By RAYMOND WILLIAMS. *Chatto and Windus.* 30s.

THIS is a book of quite radical importance, and even a reader who dissents from its conclusions may have to accept a substantial alteration in his mental habit.

Mr. Williams is a good writer of a now somewhat unusual kind; he is not, I think, gifted with any great rhetorical power—I mean that variety of persuasive technique one finds even in Mill—and his language hardly ever stirs one to even momentary excitement. Yet his long book is none the less extremely moving; its mature seriousness and unflagging candour, the continuous pressure of information intelligently formulated, amount in the long run to a memorable style. Mr. Williams says of Burke that his writing is "an articulated experience, and as such it has a validity which can survive even the demolition of its own general conclusions"; and although he is unlike Burke in most other ways Mr. Williams resembles him in this. This is not to suggest that Mr. Williams' conclusions have no force in themselves; theorists of equality should ponder them carefully, for they provide arguments more informed and more humane than any modern politician is capable of developing. Mr. Williams will also remind modern utilitarian Socialists of the absence from their thought of elements which were, in its charismatic phase, integral to it. Does this seem to you an irresponsible paradox: "a stratified society based on

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merit is as objectionable . . . as a stratified society based on money or on birth"? It will no longer seem so when you read it in the context of this highly responsible historical enquiry.

Mr. Williams studies the special but vague vocabulary, developed over the past 170 years, which enables us to speak, in the modern world, of our national "culture"; and his method requires him to consider in a series of essays the opinions of many important writers from Burke, Bentham, and Coleridge, to Lawrence, Tawney, Eliot, and Orwell. What follows is confined to an aspect of the enquiry which has not, I think, been much commented upon. Good as he is at seeing the abysses of metaphor in words like "culture" and "ladder" (the one by which working-class boys "escape"), it appears that even Mr. Williams cannot be eternally vigilant. Consider, for instance, the whole group of ideas associated with the word "organic." Mr. Williams deals circumspectly with them, and even adds a special note on the history of this word, though disappointingly, it takes one little farther than the *Oxford English Dictionary*. An "organic" society would not be, in our modern way, stratified; it would have a "common culture." Burke thought he saw such a society breaking up; Lawrence saw it broken, and called it *mechanical, disintegrated, amorphous*. A time in the past is necessarily regarded as being earlier than this break-up—hence that mediævalism which is a characteristic even of Cobbett. In the contrast between the good time and the subsequent bad one, with its "separation" of class from class, imagination from intellect, thought from feeling, and culture from the rest of life, there is ground for a total criticism of one's contemporary society; and in their different ways Coleridge, Pugin, Ruskin, Arnold, Belloc, Lawrence, and others, made this criticism. Now Mr. Williams sees that the difficulty here is in finding a plausible date for this separation, this mechanisation, this loss of form. He convicts Dr. Leavis of "a surrender to a characteristically industrialist, or urban, nostalgia" for the "organic community," of which our only certain knowledge is that "it has always gone." If it had gone for Cobbett, it had gone for Goldsmith; and so on back to Jonson and Shakespeare, for whom it had also gone; and so on back to Tahiti or the *Saturnia regna*. In fact, the whole value of the idea of an "organic society" and the myths it replaced lies in their availability as unassailable criteria and not in their status as historical facts.

Mr. Williams sees some of this—he is far too thorough and self-critical a writer to permit anyone else to see much deeper below the surface of his book than he can himself—but is not quite unaffected by the organicist myth. He is devoted to the notion of "lived reality"—it is fundamental to the distinction between "culture-as-art" and "culture-as-a-whole," and he has respect for a working-class wisdom that continues to preserve this "lived" quality, regardless of the uncertainty and debasement of modern "mass"-communications. But he also appears to agree with Ruskin that under the conditions of modern machine-society, "a great national art" is impossible. He deplores the modern idea of the artist as "Ishmaelite," as necessarily separated from and persecuted by a society which cannot share his intuitions of truth. My own feeling is that Mr. Williams has been forced by the myth to misrepresent the history and the value of the "Ishmaelite" concept, perhaps in order to be overgenerous to working-class culture.

The history of the organicist elements in modern thought is very complex, and requires investigation of the sort that has recently been given to the impact of Goethe's morphology on non-biological disciplines; but if anything is clear it is that we should not forget how totally and how treacherously these elements are dependent on the biological analogy. Consequently, for instance, we should not accept the Ruskin-Williams' view on the impossibility of a "great

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national art" without observing that the "organic" myth is here involved, though entirely confined to the word "national"; we cannot have great art of a kind which springs from "a common culture," but we can still have great art all the same, though it is normally "Ishmaelite," and its producers seek their *Gestalt* elsewhere than in society. Mr. Williams might argue that their successes are achieved in spite of "separation"; yet we cannot imagine a modern art not so achieved, whereas we actually have one of which "separation" is a *donnée*. I think, in fact, that he misrepresents the Romantic artist. And if one considers that our society exhibits the marks of "uniform cultural behaviour" only under the pressure of a major war, and remembers what that was like, "separation" may seem less hateful in itself, and a degree of it essential (though this has no political implication) to any tolerable way of life. One of the chapters in Professor Harding's *The Impulse to Dominate*, a fine book about this issue which is too little known, is grimly enough entitled "War as a Cultural Product."

I am more diffident about "working-class culture"; the eye that sees through Orwell will see through me, though I do know this culture at first hand. And I do not feel that it retains the value that Mr. Williams allows it. Specifically, I think the harm being done by television advertising is catastrophic, and it isn't helpful to say that it caters, like the popular press, for demands that have always existed; their existence was what made civility desirable in the first place. As I read the last controversial pages of this magnificent book I recalled a passage Mr. Williams quoted earlier from Ruskin's speech to the manufacturers of Bradford, and wondered whether that audience, and its incomparably more powerful heirs, the modern advertising agencies, had left much to be saved. Yet Mr. Williams is perhaps one of the few modern men of letters who would dare to say this to a congress of advertisers:

> Whatever happens to you, this, at least, is certain, that the whole of your life will have been spent in corrupting public taste and encouraging public extravagance. Every preference you have won by gaudiness must have been based on the purchaser's vanity; every demand you have created by novelty has fostered in the consumer a habit of discontent; and when you retire into inactive life, you may, as a subject of consolation for your declining years, reflect that precisely according to the extent of your past operations, your life has been successful in retarding the arts, tarnishing the virtues, and confusing the manners of your country.

Frank Kermode

Rebel in Parliament

People and Parliament. By NIGEL NICOLSON. *Weidenfeld and Nicolson.* 18s.

THE most general criticism levelled at Parliament by the uninitiated, who judge this institution only by what they can read about it in the newspapers, is that its members are either stooges, lobby fodder, and self-inflated windbags, or that they are ultimately irresponsible; that they place more importance on party strife than they do on matters of national interest. This criticism and this image is false and misleading.

Nigel Nicolson, in his book *People and Parliament*, renders the House of Commons a great service in helping to correct this impression. The fact that he does this is particularly to his credit in view of the treatment which has been dealt him by his constituency Association, and the relative lack of support which, in his present dilemma, he has received from the members of his own front bench. At the time of the Suez crisis he placed himself in the embarrassing position of being one of a handful of Conservative members who felt strongly that, in the situation which the Suez crisis produced, their duty was to exercise their judgment rather than blindly to follow their leader. As a result of this, he became something of a political embarrassment to the majority (but not to all) of his colleagues. It could be argued that his only crime was that he kept his head at a time when most of his colleagues were losing theirs. The irony of the situation is that he showed that he was neither a stooge, nor a wind-bag, nor ultimately irresponsible. He adopted a course of action which the average critic of the House of Commons is always urging on Members of Parliament. The thanks that he received for his efforts was that his very average constituency Association of Bournemouth East and Christchurch promptly disowned him, and this they did in the most uncouth manner imaginable.

People in Parliament is the story of Nicolson's tussle with the caucus which controls his constituency Association. It is also a reflective work on the relationship of a Member of Parliament to his constituency Association, to his electorate, to his party, and to the House of Commons. The author accepts the view expressed by Leo Amery, that the British political system can be defined as "democracy by consent and not by delegation; government of the people, for the people, with but not by the people." He examines and rejects the conception of the Member of Parliament as a delegate. He brings a sense of perspective to the House of Commons as an institution which

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must be concerned primarily with matters of judgment and only secondarily with matters of loyalty. He opens a number of doors and we catch a glimpse of the intriguing complexity of personalities which gives to the House its character. If we consider politicians as roughly divisible into two categories, "cardinals" and "warriors," we see Sir Winston Churchill as the prototype of warrior; the present Prime Minister succeeds in being a bit of each; Aneurin Bevan fails through being a good deal of neither; R. A. Butler is unquestionably a cardinal. What did Butler really think, at the time, of the action taken by Sir Anthony Eden in 1956? If he had combined more of the qualities of the warrior with those of the cardinal, might he have acted differently? Nigel Nicolson does no more than whet our appetite and start our imagination working, and, in the context in which he writes, he has done well to avoid anything that could smack of gossip or of personal vituperation. The House of Commons, as he points out, is exonerated from any charges of ordinary corruption, largely due to certain long-standing and well-tried traditions. It is redeemed, too, by the appearance in every generation of a comparatively small number of individuals who give to it a real distinction. In both these senses Nigel Nicolson is an excellent House of Commons man.

When I had finished reading his book I wondered what kind of a place Parliament would be if all of its Members on the Conservative side conformed to the standards set by the Bournemouth East Conservative Association. Supposing Major Grant, the Association's chairman, had been able to nominate all Conservative Members over the last twenty years, what would the state of the party be to-day? If there is any logic in Major Grant's atitude, Sir Winston Churchill would have been eliminated when, in the 'thirties, he was at variance with the party over its attitude towards Hitler. Sir Anthony Eden would have been asked to resign, when he fell out with his own Government in 1938 over the matter of imposing sanctions on Mussolini at the start of his Abyssinian campaign. Harold Macmillan would have been asked to stand down when he refused the party whip in 1936. The party then would have been deprived of its last three leaders, to say nothing of the fact that the country would probably have lost the last war. Would the country ever have voted into power a party consisting of candidates of the political foresight of Major Friend (who is, for the moment, the candidate chosen by Major Grant to supersede the sitting Member)? The answer surely is "no." The position of the party would have been that of a regiment reduced to the strength of a platoon (made up, presumably, of

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officers of field rank). The idea is preposterous, but then so is much that has been happening in Bournemouth. There is still time for the local Conservatives to redeem the situation at the adoption meeting which must precede the General Election.

Suez produced a condition of fever in the country in which few people remained entirely rational. We were all of us either sheep or goats, loyalists or traitors. But that was in 1956; the fever has now abated, people have come to their senses. A great many Conservatives, who at the time felt thoroughly bewildered, now regret the actions, and particularly the methods, adopted by their party. When Nigel Nicolson presents himself for re-adoption, it will not be he who is on trial, it will be his local Conservative Association and the Conservative Party, and even, in some measure, the workings of the British political system.

Michael Astor

IN 1958

★

Colin Clark
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ECONOMICS? [*April*]

J. H. Hexter
STORM OVER THE GENTRY [*May*]

Joseph Alsop
THE NEW BALANCE OF POWER [*May*]

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FROM THE OTHER SHORE

The Hlasko Case

MAREK HLASKO, the young Polish novelist, was faced with a dilemma in West Berlin. He applied to the Polish diplomatic mission there for a prolongation of his passport, the validity of which (for his travels in Western Europe) was expiring. But he received a reply that it could only be done after his return to Warsaw. This was not unexpected. Hlasko had many reasons to fear a trap. The publication of his books had been stopped in Poland; his films were banned; the presentation of "The Eighth Day of the Week" by its West German co-producers caused Poland's withdrawal from the Venice Film Festival; and personal attacks in the press, Soviet and Polish, often amounted to denunciation. The difficult decision of "choosing freedom" had to be made—although Hlasko realises its disadvantages for him as a writer. He had often expressed his conviction that "a writer without a fatherland is nothing." As the *Manchester Guardian* notes, "perhaps he has concluded that a writer's fatherland is where he is free."

Only a fortnight before Hlasko's defection to the West, *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (September 23rd, 1958) published an interview with the president of the Polish Writers' Union, the elderly poet, Antoni Slonimski, on the occasion of his official visit to Moscow. In his diplomatic but courageous replies Slonimski defended the young Polish writers who had been subject to so many attacks in the *Gazeta*. It was the very first time that a favourable word about them had found its way to its columns. Slonimski defended, in particular, Marek Hlasko against charges of "over-pessimism" and "blackening of reality":

> Do you believe, we have asked Antoni Slonimski, that the search of the young Polish writers is in the right direction?
>
> *They are going in various directions, and therefore we have books which are correct and fallacious. Personally, I regard Mrozek, Toeplitz, and Hlasko as the most talented young writers. About them there exist great misunderstandings and differences of opinion. In my view, Hlasko is a romantic; he writes about unpleasant, painful things; but not because he likes them, but because he suffers from them.*
>
> Don't you think that Hlasko's writings are, to a great degree, a propaganda of pessimism, drunkenness, and hooliganism?
>
> *I think that to say so would be to exaggerate. Hlasko is only at the beginning of his literary career, and for all his shortcomings there is talent there....*

Literaturnaya Gazeta returned to the subject on October 16th with a long article devoted to Hlasko and to the tendency among the Polish critics to by-pass his "anti-socialist positions." Referring to Slonimski's remarks, it castigated him for the defence of Hlasko:

> This well-meaning declaration is very strange indeed. It does not correspond to the statements made by Hlasko himself which we have quoted, and which are quite unambiguous and anything but "romantic." ... Hlasko is now in West Berlin. He will, no doubt, find a place in the camp of the reactionary Western propaganda. A decadent dabbler in literary carrion, he, who has made the slander of People's Poland his own profession, has become a renegade....

Slonimski (who was attacked once again in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* for his defence of Hlasko) felt compelled to declare that "Marek Hlasko's decision caused me personal grief. He has offended me; I believed in him and defended him. I am afraid that by giving up his native country he has harmed himself most."

Some voices in the Polish press contested this (rather mild) view. A participant in a discussion organised by the editorial board of the youth paper *Wspolczesnosc* (Contemporary Age, November 1–15, 1958) argued:

> If we are trying to consider the case of Hlasko in this gathering of young writers, it is first of all as a problem of a fellow-writer, and that is why we devote so much time to it. Moral and political charges were made here.... I am concerned with a problem if there is a theoretically valid principle that when a writer, for whatever reasons, and they may be strictly subjective, chooses for himself a new domicile, is he then to be blamed for a moral misdemeanour? I stress: I am considering a theoretical case.
>
> We know, for instance, cases in the history of literature where a writer found himself in conflict with his society and either could not, or would not, stay in his country but chose a different place to live. Can we blame all these writers? Emphatically not.
>
> Can we also affirm with certainty that anybody ceases to be a good writer only because he has changed his milieu? Do his writings always suffer from this? Often the increased distance from the milieu described gives to the writer a greater degree of objectivity....

Another participant in the discussion complained against "misinformation in the press":

> I am of the opinion that if a certain event is reported, it is necessary to give all the circumstances and to try to explain the motives of a decision. Only the Polish Radio reported that the Polish authorities refused to renew Hlasko's passport. The whole press has been silent on this. It has not reported that Hlasko, who wrote about it in a letter to his publisher, asked for a renewal of his passport, and was refused.

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Outside Gunther

JOHN GUNTHER'S *Inside Russia To-day* has been meeting with hostility in the Soviet press. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (September 18th, 1958) voiced the official displeasure:

> The purpose of Gunther is clear: to show U.S.S.R. in the most unfavourable light possible. But he finds himself in a difficult position. Nowadays, one cannot ignore the unprecedented achievements of the Soviets, who have in many respects overtaken the West. The American propagandists have to talk about these achievements and to explain them, if they are not to lose the confidence of their audience. And so Gunther, willy nilly, had to devote separate chapters of his book to the development of industry, science, education, and culture in the Soviet Union. The author quotes many facts and statistics which openly escape from the Procrustean bed of his anti-Soviet conception.... Whenever Gunther begins to analyse these facts, to draw conclusions or assess the questions of ideology or politics, he falls to the level of those bazaar slanderers, the specialists on the Russian question.... Gunther understands that one cannot turn the wheel of history back; a substantial part of the world population has already chosen the path of social progress, the path of socialism. Taking courage he admits the necessity of peaceful coexistence of the two world social systems. And this is the most important conclusion, among the few healthy ones, made by the author of *Inside Russia To-day*....

A review in *Novy Mir* (No. 10, 1958) is not dissimilar:

> The latest *Inside* reflects a collection of reports and a level of presentation which are not only Mr. Gunther's own. Unfortunately, such is the level of knowledge of many in American politics. Gunther has only summarised and published the "information" on the basis of which political prognoses and plans are being made.... John Gunther undertook a job on which many professional slanderers have broken their teeth. When his turn came, he prepared himself, trained himself, learned things, looked for advice—and again confusion resulted.... We will not surmise what Mr. Gunther represents and what is his "inside." We are not interested whether he is a professional or a volunteer of intelligence work. I dare say that for a professional he is a bit too naïve and talkative. Thus or otherwise, behind him are the counsellors, the "specialists," who by their irresponsible "information" are misleading not only Gunther but other much more serious political persons....

Particular Attention

Here and now, under our very eyes, a new man is being built, a man for whom the demands of humanism are no mere words. There are no half-measures, and no flags are thrown overboard when they become annoying to those who have been flying them. In this new man new traits of personality are formed, personality imposing itself on the world by building a better world, arousing the hate and fear of the exploiters everywhere, the personality of a COMMUNIST MAN.

For the first time in history, the force called the Communist Party has shown by its integrating rôle that it is the architect of that process. Those whose work is thus dignified have to pay particular attention to those who are making a millennium of history.

SCINTEIA (BUCHAREST), SEPTEMBER 3, 1958

Messrs. McGruer & Co., Ltd., Yacht Builders, Clynder, have received an order from the Roumanian People's Republic for an 8-metre Cruiser/Racing yacht for delivery to the Black Sea early in 1959.

The yacht is being built to a high-class specification and under Lloyd's survey. Her dimensions are 42 ft. O.A. by 27.3 ft. W.L. by 9.2 ft. beam and 6.25 ft. draft. The sails are of Terylene by Messrs. Ratsey & Lapthorn of Cowes and the rigging is of nylon-covered stainless steel.

The bulkheads and interior are being finished with plastic material and accommodation is for five—arranged in two cabins and a quarter berth.

Particular attention is being paid to the navigation and provision is being made for electronic equipment. Keep Cool cabinets are being fitted for food storage and an outfit of plastic dishes as well as the usual pots, pans, cutlery, etc.

The yacht has been designed by James McGruer and particular attention is being paid to giving her a smart appearance.

THE YACHTSMAN (LONDON), SUMMER 1958

*

Items

THE literary magazine *Oktiabr* announces the publication of the second part of *Not by Bread Alone* in 1959. It will be entitled *The New Generation*. After the recent campaign against him, Dudintsev had promised to atone for his "errors" in his next book.... *By Circuses Alone?* The Soviet press announced that many circus artists were given high awards by the state. The ceremony was attended by the Minister of Culture, Mikhailov, and took place in the Moscow circus. *Sovetskaia Kultura* devoted several articles to the event and has given some statistics about the development of "Circus Art" in the U.S.S.R. Apparently, in the last five years, circus performances were seen by 160,000,000 persons.... Comparing the London and Warsaw performance of *The Entertainer*, a Warsaw critic writes, "Of course, the London actors were much better Englishmen. (But) the Warsaw troupe acted much more evenly." As for the actress who played the rôle of Phoebe: she acted "remembering all the time that she is only a semi-intellectual—but from a very cultural country." (*Nowa Kultura*, No. 41, 1958.)

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LETTERS

"Lolita"

I HOPE that I am not alone in taking exception to certain statements and implications in Mr. Trilling's essay, "The Last Lover" (ENCOUNTER, October). The passages in question have to do with Mr. Trilling's thoughts on lust and sexual pleasure, and their place in literature.

The belief that there "is no ground for objection" to writing which "will raise lustful thoughts in the reader"—Christian objections to this statement are too obvious to be made here. No one denies the existence of lust, but how many important thinkers in Western civilisation have given it the status of a legitimate place in art, of something to be sought for? Are we witnessing the influence of the lewd variety of paperback covers, of the picture magazines known to the trade as "girlie books"?

And what kind of morality is it that furnishes "no reason on why literature should not have as one of its intentions the arousing of thoughts of lust?" For that matter, what kind of literature is this, for which Mr. Trilling speaks? Why is "sexual pleasure," or lust, now linked with phenomena to which we are irrevocably tied (death, food), or to which, as we have always been told, we ought to aspire (heroism, virtue, wisdom)?

Finally, how is it that Mr. Trilling can easily move from speaking of "lust" to "desire" to "sexual pleasure," and still have the same concept in mind? Not only Christians, but all people who care about words, their meaning, and the necessity for clear writing, must be dismayed to find these very different words now made interchangeable. Were I to hand in such a piece of writing to Mr. Trilling, I trust he would mark me down for loose thinking and loose writing.

EDWARD N. TODD

Baltimore, Maryland

Words and Meaning

IN your November issue Mr. John Marshall, writing of St.-J. Perse's *Seamarks*, applauds the article "Critics—English and French" by M. Yves Bonnefoy (July ENCOUNTER) and the approving editorial comment on it in *The Times Literary Supplement*. May I suggest that M. Bonnefoy's account of English critical thought and practice is seriously inaccurate, despite the ready seconding of it by the *T.L.S.*?

M. Bonnefoy quite enormously exaggerates the extent to which Dr. I. A. Richards' old "scientific"/"emotive" division (proposed by him as a student of *semantics*) has ever been accepted by students of *literature* or has ever influenced them (including Dr. Richards himself) in their critical practice. That *some* school or university teachers may have applied clumsily, insensitively, even irresponsibly, a "technique" deriving ultimately from Richards' work (but from another side of it) is, I should agree, very likely; but that is something rather different. I simply cannot imagine how the *T.L.S.* could presume to speak for "the English critic" in such a statement as "Unlike *us* [my italics] the French critic considers that 'poetic activity . . . is not based on the unity of sign and thing signified, but on their disjunction . . .' "; any more than I can imagine how it could invoke with such assurance "the scientist's objections to poetic usage"—(one wonders: which scientist?—when?—in what respect?).

The fundamental error, as it seems to me, is to be found in M. Bonnefoy's speaking of "a criticism founded on the analysis of meaning," after which he claims that "poetic criticism which bases itself on the analysis of meaning is losing sight of its aim." It simply is not true that what has been primarily pursued in the literary criticism of the years under discussion is the analysis of *meaning*: it is the analysis of *words*, and the subsequent discovery, recognition, in fact, *synthesis* of meaning. Any subsequent analysis of *effect* is another matter and can be pursued quite independently of any prior analytic approach to the words such as has been characteristic of criticism in the last thirty or so years; and it has probably *always* happened in some fashion or other. Certainly, such analysis of effect in our own time has by no means gone hand in hand with a belief in a positivistic "scientific"/"emotive" dichotomy, and it must not, in any case, be identified with the effort to ascertain meaning as M. Bonnefoy identifies it in the phrases I have quoted from his admirably intentioned but imperfectly informed account of things.

F. N. LEES

English Department
University of Manchester

Men at the Top

IN your November issue, Mr. Roy Lewis and Miss Rosemary Stewart tell us what they have observed about top business men. Sometimes, however, they seem not to have observed very accurately. If they looked around them I am sure they would realise that what they read in Professor Hayek's works—about the power of the minor official being greater than that of the big business man—is absurd. The minor official (a Senior Executive Officer, let us say) still operates within a limited discretion and serves a chain of superiors; the big business man does neither. The authors point out that Mr. Lyttleton had more power as Colonial Secretary than, translated, he does as chairman of A.E.I. (it would be an extraordinary state of affairs if he didn't), but he still carries a lot more weight, surely, in government circles than most major officials, let alone minor ones.

The authors seem to be groping a little in their remarks about trade associations and pressure groups. The leaders of most associations would

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scarcely agree that they are "little more successful in their objects than... the Anti-Cruel Sports Society"—there would be a flood of resignations if it were true. Didn't the British Iron and Steel Federation manage to delay and eventually get rid of nationalisation? And what became of most of the Development Councils proposed by independent working parties after the war? These are only examples of the big battles; there is a constant stream of smaller affairs.

Mr. Lewis and Miss Stewart have noticed that individual business men have great power in a small area. But this overlaps with the unavoidable responsibilities of modern Governments for economic prosperity: things *may* go very well if the Government doesn't interfere, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Board of Trade are always anxious to make sure of success, since their political fortunes depend on it. And the response of business to this interest by governments has been to try to modify its impact and its methods, by argument and persuasion, by non-cooperation, and by political pressure. This is the main function of most trade associations, to which, as the authors have noted, many business men pay great attention.

Certainly exaggerated notions about "great and sinister power behind the scenes" must be discountenanced. But it is not true that the men at the top take no part in shaping public policy. There are currently some fantastic exaggerations abroad, in Conservative and Liberal circles, about the great power of the trade unions. The collective power of business men is surely greater: they are the employers and the managers, and very properly, they have a major influence on the direction of economic affairs.

LEONARD TIVEY

Whyteleafe, Surrey

The Weather in Bombay

IN the very first entry in Melvin J. Lasky's "Indian Notebook" [ENCOUNTER, Sept. 1958], there is a description of his arrival in Bombay: "... At the white-marbled airport I note the weather report which coolly lists the day's temperature as 38 degrees C., 101 degrees F., humidity 89 p.c., normal... !" This combination of temperature and humidity gives a false impression of the tropical climate and its alleged "normalcy" only serves to frighten prospective visitors away.

It should be said that this combination neither occurs in Bombay nor anywhere else in the tropical world. Somewhere along the line an error must have been made. Perhaps the two statistics should not have been associated for the same period of time. If the humidity of 89 degrees refers to very early morning, when the temperature was perhaps 10 degrees lower, and the 38 degrees C. referred to high noon, then the matter would be somewhat less puzzling. As a matter of fact, the normal daily temperature in the Bombay climate was: March 86 degrees F. (30 degrees C.), April 89 degrees F. (32 degrees C.), May 91 degrees F. (33 degrees C.), June 89 degrees F. (32 degrees C.). As for the average relative humidity, it lies, at 1600 hours, between 65 and 68 per cent. Only very rarely during the "hot season" does the temperature rise to 93 degrees F. (34 degrees C.), and perhaps only in a decade to 100–101 degrees F. (38 degrees C.). But in these extreme cases the relative humidity is correspondingly lower, usually around 50 per cent.

In the event that Mr. Lasky actually arrived in Bombay in a temperature of 38 degrees C., then he was a suffering witness to a most unusual meteorological event. If the date of the day in question had appeared in the "Indian Notebook," then we would have been most pleased to oblige the author and your readers with the official and exact meteorological data from the Indian Weather Service.

DR. M. RODENWALD

Deutscher Wetterdienst
Seewetteramt
Hamburg, Germany

[*Heat-sick as I was on the aforementioned day in Bombay, I feebly marked the following passage in an Indian friend's copy of Suzuki's* ZEN-BUDDHISM *(p. 49): "Someone asked, 'What is the fundamental teaching of the Buddha?' Said the master, 'There is enough breeze in this fan to keep me cool.' ..."—M. J. L.*]

Telephone

I WAS interested to read in Mr. Robert Neville's article "Vatican Report" that he regards Pope Pius XII as the first Pope to have made use of the telephone. When my father, mother, elder sister and I had audience of Pius XI in 1931 we distinctly saw—this being a private audience—a gilt telephone on the desk in his study. Of course, I cannot say if he made *use* of it, but it was *there*.

BRIAN FAWCETT

Washington, D.C.

Gascoyne

IN re *"Yet once more O ye laurels ..."*: The poet *Gascoigne* may or may not be obscure, as Miss Olga Katzin suggests, but since he lived from 1525–1577 he must have waited longer than most for the Laureateship. Let's hope he gets it.

PATRIC DICKINSON

Savile Club
London

[*The poet David Gascoyne, having been born in 1916, may have to wait less than most.*—ED.]

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AUTHORS

John Kenneth Galbraith, whose latest work *The Affluent Society* is that curious thing for a study in economics, namely, a "best-seller" in America (and at least a good seller in its British edition by Hamish Hamilton), teaches at Harvard University. He was born in Canada fifty years ago. During World War II he was in charge of price controls in Washington and later a director of the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey. For several years Professor Galbraith was on the editorial board of *Fortune* Magazine, and during both 1952 and 1956 he served on the personal staff of Adlai Stevenson. Some of his books are: *A Theory of Price Control, Economics and the Art of Controversy, American Capitalism,* and *The Great Crash 1929.* On his return from Poland and Yugoslavia we happened to meet Mr. Galbraith on the island of Rhodes where, between bouts of polemic with Ignazio Silone and swimming along the pebbly shore, he was kind enough to show us his journal before sending it on to Harvard for final publication.

Alastair Buchan *writes of himself:* "Forty. Served six years in the Canadian Army. Hated military life, but got progressively more fascinated with problems of strategy and defence through three years as assistant editor of *The Economist,* five years as Washington Correspondent, and three years back in London as the Defence and Diplomatic Correspondent for *The Observer.* Recently resigned to devote full-time to these problems. By nature a peaceful and optimistic man. . . ."

Burns Singer (there is a brief biographical note in our March 1957 number) *writes of himself and his co-translator:* "I first met Jerzy Peterkiewicz in 1946. At that time he was studying at London University and writing poems in Polish. He is now lecturer in Polish literature at the School of Slavonic Studies in London, and the author of three novels in English, the latest of which appeared last spring under the title, *Future to Let.* When we met again in 1955 we decided that we must try to get together an anthology in English which would give some idea of the range of Polish literature. Our plan is for a selection of 100 poems covering the five centuries 1450–1950. Two-thirds of the work has already been done. These brief excerpts in ENCOUNTER are the first of our versions to appear in print. . . ."

Richard Rumbold, *writes:* "My first book was an autobiography, *My Father's Son,* which John Betjeman described as a 'heartrending journey into the depths of a young man's soul.' Written during the course of a long psychoanalysis, it laid many a ghost out of the past. During the war I was an R.A.F. pilot which also helped to enfranchise me; the airman acquires detachment as he roves about the sky, gazing down upon the termite-like earth. I later tried to embody some of these experiences in a biography of the French airman and poet, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, in collaboration with Margaret Stewart.

"I have recently developed an interest in the Far East, sensing the gentleness and passivity of the Oriental and his comparative freedom from the tyrannical extravert drives of Western man. And Buddhism, too, I believe, has something to say to natures such as mine—it calms and dims the passions, enabling one to see more directly into life and its entangling processes. I am trying to write a book about Buddhism, describing in full my experiences in a Zen monastery. . . ."

Virgil Thomson (whose article is based on a paper given at the Venice Biennial to a seminar on the arts sponsored by the Congress for Cultural Freedom) *writes of himself:* "I was born in Kansas City, Missouri, grew up there, and went to war from there. That was the other war. Then I was educated some more in Boston and Paris. In composition I was chiefly the pupil of Nadia Boulanger. While I was still young I taught music at Harvard and played the organ at King's Chapel, Boston. Then I returned to Paris and lived there for many years, till the Germans came, in fact. From 1940 to 1954 I was Music Critic of the New York *Herald Tribune.* I still live in New York.

"My best-known works are the operas *Four Saints in Three Acts* and *The Mother of Us All* (both texts by Gertrude Stein), *The Plough that Broke the Plains* and *The River* (films by Pare Lorentz), and *Louisiana Story* (film by Robert Flaherty)."

Bertrand Russell has completed a new book on *My Philosophical Development* (Allen & Unwin), and both his essay in this number as well as his remarks on Wittgenstein are from this forthcoming volume.

Joseph and Stewart Alsop's by-line was, with Walter Lippmann's, the most spectacular and influential in post-war American journalism. Their column was regularly printed in more than a hundred U.S. newspapers. Stewart recently resigned from "the Brothers Cassandra," and the book *The Reporter's Trade* is their last collaborative effort. . . .

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